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1992

WORLD EVENTS

Here is a list of key events in 1992, but with a difference
– it presents news from the South which usually goes unreported in the North.

&

Magazine Index

The central pages of the NI are devoted to one theme each month. Those for 1992 are listed below. At the end of this supplement you will find an index listing items that have appeared in the magazine during the year referenced according to subject. The index includes stories that appear in the outside sections of the magazine such as Update and Country Profile.

The central themes for 1992 were:

January	227	Feminism in the 1990s	We've only just begun
February	228	Changing Charity	50 years of Oxfam
March	229	Human Rights	The second NI Olympics
April	230	Green Justice	The South speaks out
May	231	The Rise of Japan	Prisoners of prosperity
June	232	Development	A guide to the ruins
July	233	Disabled Lives	Difference and defiance
August	234	Saving the Sea	Coral gardens and ocean blues
September	235	Population and Environment	Sex, lies and global survival
October	236	The Gulf in Flames	The real cost of Desert Storm
November	237	The Paranormal	Magical mystery tour
December	238	The Horn of Africa	Horror and hope

Copies of all of 1991's issues are still available for purchase. To obtain magazines from previous years please see the back of this supplement.

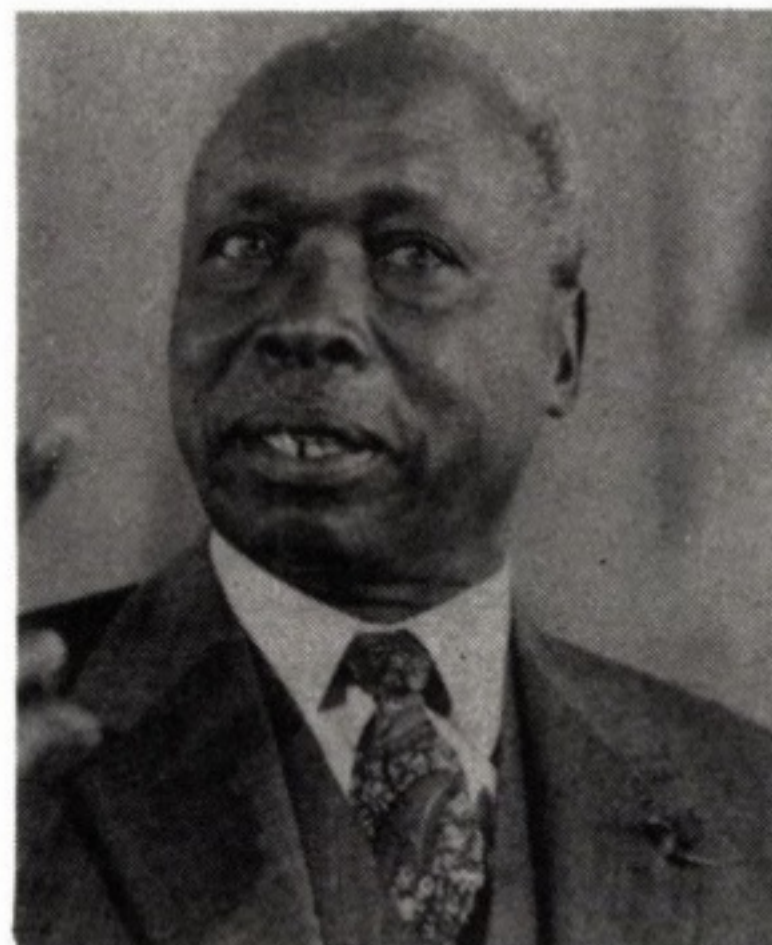
1992

... as seen from the perspective of the South.

Our media feed us news dominated by rich-world events and preoccupations. Here the **NI** tries to redress the balance with an alternative view of the year's key events.

DECEMBER 1991

BURKINA FASO Leader Blaise Compaore, who led the coup which killed former President Thomas Sankara in 1987, wins a hollow victory in presidential elections. Opposition candidates withdrew when he rejected their demand for a national pro-democracy conference.



KENYA In a startling about-turn after months of international and domestic pressure, President Daniel Arap Moi agrees to legalize opposition parties.

TOGO Rebel soldiers seize Prime Minister.

UNITED KINGDOM Two years after promising to take 2,000 Vietnamese boat people from Hong Kong, Britain has accepted less than half that number.

BRAZIL agrees to an IMF austerity programme that will restore it to the good books of the financial community, but at the cost of continuing an already severe recession.

CAMBODIA The UN's big five step in to settle a crisis threatening Cambodian peace, ordering the leaders of the four warring factions to get back to rebuilding their shattered nation. The Government has freed 10,000 prisoners since the peace treaty ending the civil war was signed on 23 October.

IRAQ Kurds go on mass hunger strike over the West's 'silence' about the swelling homeless, 800,000 in all, in the icy mountains of the north.

SOMALIA Fighting escalates in Mogadishu where three weeks of clan battles leave 3,000 dead and 7,000 wounded in the struggle between President Ali Mahdi Mohamed and General Mohamed Aidad Farrah, chair of the ruling United Somali Congress.

HONG KONG 28 Vietnamese boat people are forcibly repatriated. They go quietly.

BURMA/MYANMAR Troops end student demonstrations for democracy.

INDIA Police arrest at least 200 Tibetan refugees to prevent demonstrations against the visit of Li Peng, the Chinese Prime Minister.

ETHIOPIA 50,000 people are left homeless by a fire that

wrecks the town of Bare in the south-east.

JANUARY 1992

SIERRA LEONE Tens of thousands of refugees flee fresh attacks by Liberian rebels loyal to Charles Taylor.

AMAZON The remains of a previously unsuspected ancient culture in the Amazon Basin, including evidence of large settlements, are dated by Oxford University scientists to 6000 BC. This shows that civilization in the New World began in the Amazon Basin, rather than with the pre-Inca culture in the Andes and Mexico.

BRAZIL A church report states the number of people kept as slaves on Brazilian farms rose from 1,500 in 1990 to 4,500 in 1991. An emergency is declared in the North-East following looting and riots in an area where drought has left nine million facing starvation.

IRAQ/KUWAIT The charge that Iraqi occupiers took Kuwaiti babies from incubators and left them to die is revealed as a propaganda myth by US group Middle East Watch. The story helped galvanize US legislators at a time when many felt sanctions should have been given time to work.

ALGERIA Islamic fundamentalists call for a nationwide struggle after elections they were positioned to win are cancelled by the Government.

CAMBODIA Rival factions agree to allow new political parties and a free press. More than 10,000 internal refugees flee Khmer Rouge fire.



EL SALVADOR The 12-year civil war officially comes to an end as the Government and the left-wing FMLN guerillas sign a peace accord in Mexico City. Washington spent \$4 billion bolstering the Government and armed forces which were notorious for mass murder and other human-rights abuses. The war cost 75,000 lives.

HAITI Egged on by army hardliners, the Provisional Government spurns an internationally brokered agreement to restore power to the ousted president Jean-Bertrand Aristide. Amnesty International claims more than 1,500 people

have been killed in a campaign of political repression since the September coup.

ETHIOPIA Relief operations in the east are virtually paralyzed as renewed ethnic fighting and banditry threaten the lives of more than one million people who are dependent on emergency food supplies.

MAURITANIA More than 20,000 women march through the capital, Nouakchott, to back the main opposition presidential candidate – Ahmed Ould Daddal – and demand greater freedom for women in Islam.

MALI A new constitution establishing multi-party rule has been approved by 98 per cent of voters in a referendum, the Government says. The turnout was 43 per cent.

BURMA/MYANMAR 3,000 Muslims cross the border into Bangladesh bringing the number of refugees to 65,000.

INDIA Hard-line Hindus, surrounded by more than 1,000 heavily armed security officers, raise the Indian flag in the heart of predominantly Muslim Kashmir.

UNITED KINGDOM Band Aid is wound up after seven years.

ZIMBABWE reaches agreement with the IMF on a \$400m three-year loan with the usual strings attached.

PALESTINE/ISRAEL The third round of peace talks ends in Moscow in confusion over Palestinian participation.

FEBRUARY

SOUTH AFRICA The ANC and Inkatha hold a joint peace rally near Durban.

CAMEROON At least 100 people die in clashes between tribes in northern Cameroon and a later military crackdown.

UNITED STATES The Bush Administration begins forcibly repatriating thousands of Haitian boat people immediately after the Supreme Court lifts a lower-court injunction.

BURMA/MYANMAR Nearly 150 Muslims are feared drowned or shot dead by Burmese troops as they attempt to flee to Bangladesh. In the past two months 100,000 Burmese Muslims have taken refuge in Bangladesh.

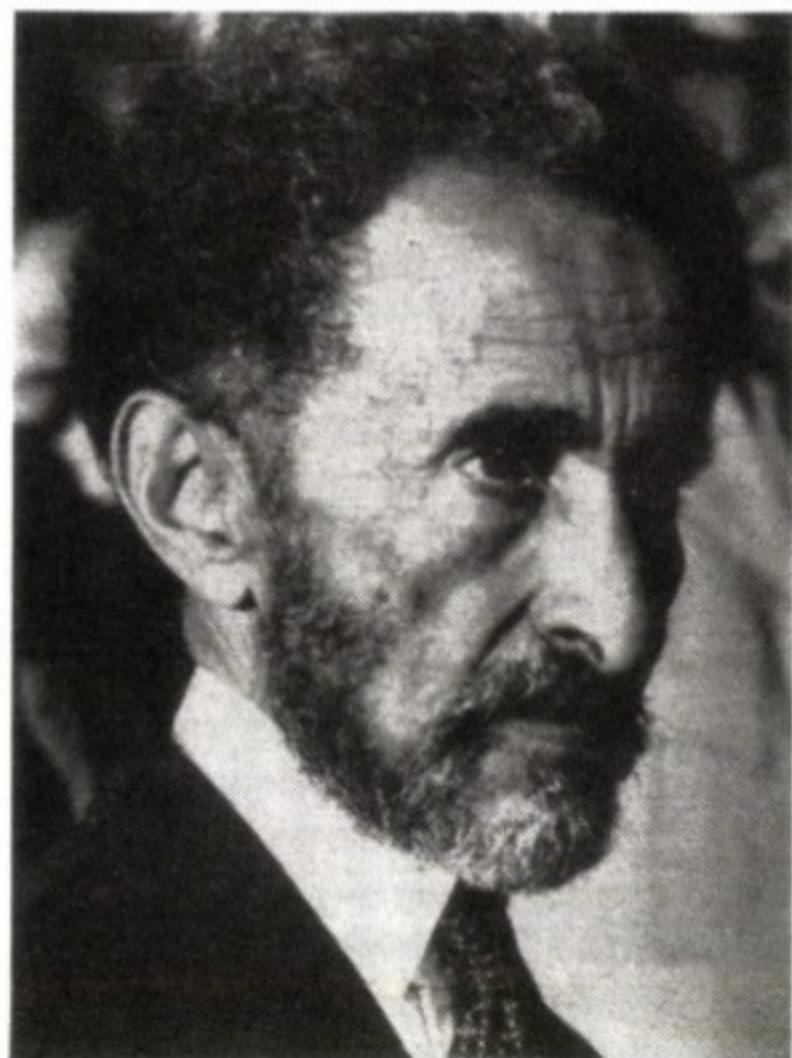
PAKISTAN is paralyzed by a national strike called by Islamic fundamentalists in support of secessionists in the Indian state of Kashmir.

ALGERIA declares a 12-month state of emergency after clashes between Muslim fundamentalists and security forces.

VIETNAM The Heavy Industry Ministry dismisses 88 officials for stealing more than a million dollars in public funds.

INDIA Maoist rebels kill 33 upper-caste Hindus in apparent retaliation for the killing of 10 of their lower-caste supporters in December. Almost one-third of the Punjab's vot-

ers defy terrorist intimidation to elect a new state government, ending five years of rule by central government.



ETHIOPIA exhumes the remains of Emperor Haile Selassie who died mysteriously after being overthrown by the Marxist revolution in 1974.

ZAIRE 30 people are believed killed and more than 100 wounded after troops open fire on a peaceful demonstration led by the clergy in Kinshasa.

PHILIPPINES 38 soldiers and 10 communist guerillas are killed on Mindanao island in one of the bloodiest clashes for years.

MARCH

SOMALIA Somali warlords sign a UN-sponsored ceasefire designed to end three months of fighting in Mogadishu. About 100,000 women and children hold a peace march.

UNICEF announces that half the world's 17 million refugees are children facing huge mortality rates.



KENYA Riot police club four women unconscious, including Kenya's best-known environmentalist Wangari Maathai, as they disperse people protesting the political imprisonment of 52 people. Tribal war opens split in the leadership of the ruling party KANU. Over 10,000 southern Ethiopians cross the border fleeing ethnic clashes and drought.

PALESTINE Muslim fundamentalists score an unexpected victory in local elections in the West Bank, taking 10 of the 11 posts. The PLO candidate takes the remaining seat.

AFRICA Famine alert as

drought tightens its grip.

MAURITANIA Election boycott hands victory to militant ruler Colonel Ould Taya.

SUDAN 425,000 squatters are expelled from Khartoum into the desert at bayonet point by order of the Housing Minister.

BANGLADESH is to drop all charges imposed against political activists during the nine-year rule of President Ershad. More than 6,000 people could benefit. Burmese Muslims continue to flood in at the rate of 5,000 a day.

CAMBODIA UN peacekeeping begins in earnest with 21,000 military and civil personnel in place. A new malaria strain resistant to all the standard drugs is reported.

CONGO Voters approve a new constitution, bringing one-party rule to an end.

INDIA rejects a proposed regional conference on establishing a nuclear-free zone in South Asia that would include Pakistan. Amnesty International reports that torture is now routine in every Indian state.



BRAZIL Sister Dulce dies, having cared for street children for over 50 years.

SOUTH AFRICA Whites vote 'yes' in their referendum, mandating President de Klerk to move ahead in negotiations with black political parties on a multiracial constitution. De Klerk gives the ANC an ultimatum to disarm.

NIGER The transitional government is dissolved only five months after it was appointed to steer the country towards multi-party democracy.

IRAQ Turkish bombers attack Kurds in northern Iraq during the Kurdish New Year.

INDONESIA rejects all Dutch aid after the Netherlands takes the high moral ground on human-rights abuses.

APRIL

IRAQ steps up its attacks on Kurds.

BURMA/MYANMAR 25 HIV-positive women are executed with cyanide injections after being sent back from Thailand where they had been forced to work as prostitutes. The Government announces it is prepared to take back all refugees and end harassment of the Karen and Rohingya minority groups.

WORLD The first hepatitis vaccine to offer long-term protection is developed.

PERU President Alberto Fujimori dissolves the National Congress, suspends the constitution and the judiciary and begins rounding up his critics.

THAILAND Army commander General Suchinda Krapayoon is named Prime Minister, 13 months after leading a coup.



NICARAGUA A group of 200 women take up arms to press Violeta Chamorro's government for free childcare programmes and free medicine.

INDIA Security forces say they killed 20 separatist militants in a three-day sweep in Jammu and Kashmir; villagers say 26 people were killed, most of them innocent woodcutters. President Bush imposes duty on \$60 million worth of Indian products in retaliation for India's refusal to provide patent protection for foreign pharmaceutical and chemical products.

ETHIOPIA The famine death toll in the south is 5,000 in the past five weeks.

BANGLADESH 5,000 homeless, jobless or divorced women rally in Dhaka to demand the Government suspend the dowry system, create jobs and ensure welfare payments. Over 1,000 indigenous people are massacred by the Army in the Chittagong hill tracts.

SUDAN The UN suspends efforts to feed 1.5 million people in the south because of the Government's military offensive against the rebels.

MOZAMBIQUE Britain and South Africa help prevent a huge oil spill from a grounded tanker causing ecological disaster to miles of coastline.



SOUTH AFRICA The collapse of Nelson and Winnie Mandela's marriage is announced. Winnie is forced to quit as ANC welfare chief.

MEXICO At least 220 people are killed and 600 injured in a series of explosions that rip through the sewer system of Guadalajara.

IRAQ Government troops launch an attack in the southern marshes, killing or wounding hundreds of civilians.

COLOMBIA The Government declares a state of emergency to counter an electricity crisis.

AFGHANISTAN The mujahideen take control of Kabul.

ISRAEL/PALESTINE The fifth round of Middle East peace talks begins in Washington. Israel offers municipal elections for Palestinians. Israeli soldiers wound 33 in Gaza shootings.

SRI LANKA At least 74 people, many of them children, are killed in a massacre of Muslim villagers by Tamil rebels and in reprisals by the survivors.



VIETNAM A new constitution recognises free enterprise.

GHANA goes to the polls to approve a new multi-party constitution.

MALI Opposition leader Alpha Oumar Komare wins election.

MAY

KENYA The worst tribal violence since independence in 1963 has claimed nearly 200 lives in two months and displaced thousands. The opposition believes the clashes are orchestrated by President Moi's government to discredit the move to multi-party politics.

SIERRA LEONE President Joseph Momoh flees to neighbouring Guinea after mutinous soldiers seize control of the country.

MALAWI Thousands of tea and tobacco plantation workers, among the poorest paid workers in Africa, join country-wide spontaneous strikes for better pay and conditions.



PHILIPPINES Pro-US General Fidel Ramos wins the presidential election.

ZIMBABWE Racked by the worst drought on record, the

Government launches a nationwide food-relief programme for children and an extensive wild-game cull in its national parks.

THAILAND Scores of pro-democracy demonstrators are feared dead after running battles with the Army in Bangkok.

KURDISTAN In an emotional expression of their freedom the Iraqi Kurds vote for the first time to select an assembly and a political leader.

UNITED STATES Coastguards intercept 1,635 Haitian boat people on international waters in one 24-hour period, setting a record. This makes 53,690 Haitians who have sought asylum in the US since the coup which ousted President Aristide in September 1991.

BURKINA FASO President Blaise Compaore's ruling party wins an overall majority in the first multi-party elections for 14 years, but the opposition claims 'a giant fraud'.

JUNE

SOMALIA Men with guns at Mogadishu airport loot six tons of food as well as drugs flown in to save the starving.

FIJI Sitiveni Rabuka is appointed Prime Minister with support from the Labour Party whose government he overthrew in two coups five years ago.

HAITI Conservative Marc Bazin is appointed leader by the military-backed interim government.

BRAZIL The Earth Summit opens in Rio but achieves little of substance. There is worldwide disappointment at the negative attitude of the US Government.

INDIA Hindu fundamentalists have recruited more than 100 historians, archaeologists, sociologists and linguists to reinterpret India's ancient civilization for school textbooks.

SOUTH AFRICA Attackers kill at least 35 people, mostly women and children, at Boipatong - the fourth mass killing in a week in a black area near Johannesburg.

CHINA publishes a new law giving state security organizations the right to use 'all police methods' to suppress illegal protests.

ETHIOPIA Africa's oldest independent nation holds its first ever democratic election.

AFGHANISTAN Refugees pour in from their long exile in Pakistan. Guerilla leader Burhanuddin Rabbani, a 50-year-old Islamic scholar, becomes President.

ISRAEL Labour wins the election; new leader Yitzhak Rabin promises peace initiatives.

AFRICA Around 40 million people face hunger this year.

IRAQ The Foreign Ministry announces that the numbers of children dying from shortages of food and medicine has

increased 300 per cent since UN sanctions took effect.

SRI LANKA More than 5,000 Sri Lankan troops launch a joint air, sea and ground offensive against the Tamils.



WORLD The World Health Organization announces that the birthrate in developing countries has dropped 36 per cent in the past 25 years.

CHILE The first local elections since military rule ended in 1990 show continuing support for President Patricio Aylwin's centre-left government.

JULY

BHUTAN/NEPAL Bhutanese refugees of Nepali ancestry are fleeing across the Indian border into Nepal at the rate of 300 a day. The influx began early last year after the Bhutanese clamped down on ethnic Nepalis who mainly live in the south of the country and constitute as much as 50 per cent of the population.

EL SALVADOR The left-wing FMLN guerillas hand over their weapons to the UN as part of the peace process.

SRI LANKA Fighting in the north leaves more than 260 Tamil guerillas and 33 soldiers dead.



AFGHANISTAN The new prime minister is Abdul Sabbur Farreed. Troops begin to clear the capital of the armed groups which have terrorized the city for the past two months. At least 100 die in rocket attacks by guerillas led by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar in the mountains south of Kabul.

SIERRA LEONE Coup leader Valentine Strasser, 27, promises to return his country to democracy 'at the soonest possible time'.

CAMBODIA The Khmer Rouge refuses to disarm.

BANGLADESH At least 200,000 Bangladeshi women aged 12-30 have been sold into slave labour, the govern-

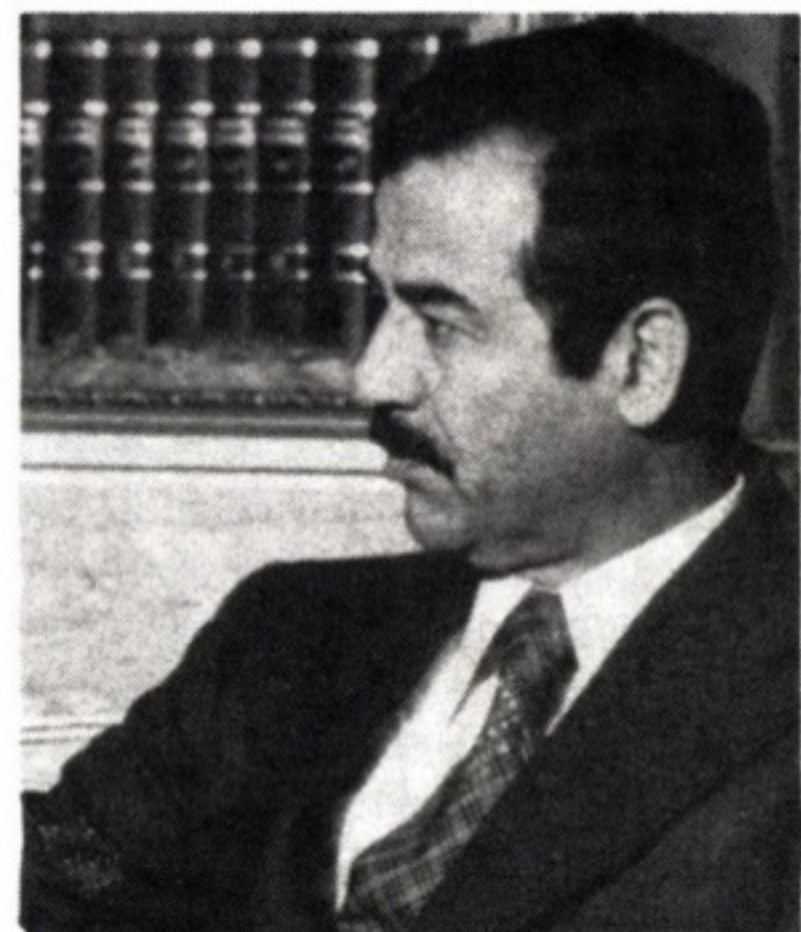
ment-controlled newspaper *Dainik Bangla* reports.

ZIMBABWE Zimbabwe's 'bushmen', descendants of Stone Age hunters and foragers, make a rare plea for food aid in the worst drought this century which has killed their traditional sources of nourishment, including roots and grubs.

CHINA Police in Guangdong Province arrest more than 7,000 prostitutes and their customers in an attempt to break up the sex trade.

PAKISTAN adopts a bill providing for a mandatory death penalty for blasphemy against Muhammad.

GUATEMALA 85 per cent of workers in electricity, transport, communications and public hospitals support a general strike over pay.



IRAQ The UN's relief effort in northern Iraq collapses, even though the danger of conflict between the Government and the three million Kurds remains acute. Faced with growing discontent over soaring food prices, Saddam Hussein orders the execution of dishonest merchants as part of a drive against speculators and profiteers.

INDIA Fighting breaks out between Hindus and Muslims over the proposed building of a temple on the site of a mosque in Ayodhya. Indian police kill Gurjan Singh Eudhsingwaha, commander of the Khalistan Liberation Force.

SOUTH AFRICA A pathologist who has examined the bodies of about 200 people who died in custody says 90 per cent were killed by the police.

AUGUST

ISRAEL Two Arab MPs are appointed deputy ministers in Yitzhak Rabin's Labour-led coalition, the first time in two decades that an Arab has been included in the Government. 800 Palestinian prisoners are released on the eve of Washington peace talks.

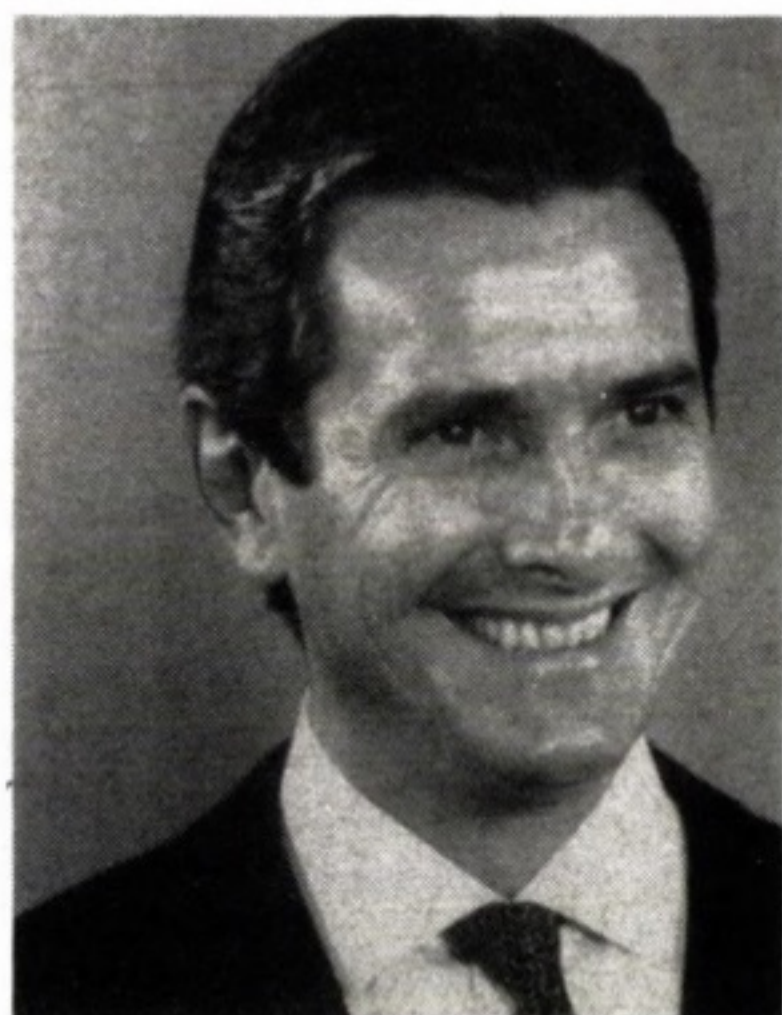
PAKISTAN 58 die in monsoon rains.

SOUTH AFRICA An ANC-called general strike is a success but 34 people are reported killed in clashes.

KUWAIT US combat exercises begin within 25 miles of Iraq's southern border.

ZIMBABWE Drought and record inflation lead the Government to raise the price of the staple food, cornmeal, by 50 per cent.

SOMALIA Up to 1,000 unaccompanied children who have fled civil war and famine in southern Sudan have 'disappeared' under the supervision and protection of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. The US begins a massive food lift.



BRAZIL About 20,000 demonstrators call for the impeachment of President Collor on corruption charges.

AFGHANISTAN Extremist Islamic rebels batter Kabul in a rocket assault that leaves nearly 1,000 people dead or wounded.

INDIA Scientists test-fire a surface-to-surface missile in the eastern state of Orissa as officials hold talks with Pakistan to ease tension.

CHINA/KOREA China and South Korea agree to establish full diplomatic relations, ending four decades of hostility.

SEPTEMBER

AFGHANISTAN Pakistan announces it will take no more refugees from the fighting. Mudslides in the Hindu Kush mountains kill at least 450.



SOUTH AFRICA ANC supporters are massacred in Ciskei. Zulu Chief Buthelezi pulls out of peace talks over the issue of disarming.

PERU Police capture Abimael Guzman, leader of the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) guerillas. Explosions rock Lima shortly after he is paraded on television.

PAKISTAN At least 2,000 people die and about 500,000 are evacuated after flash floods in Kashmir.

ETHIOPIA State radio announces that AIDS is spreading at an 'alarming rate', with 20,000 infected with HIV and 200 new cases diagnosed each month.

MEXICO The Vatican and Mexico re-establish diplomatic relations broken 134 years ago when church property was nationalized.

SOMALIA The main body of a 500-member UN force arrives to protect relief shipments in Mogadishu from looters.

PHILIPPINES The new Ramos Government legalizes the Communist Party, outlawed for 35 years, and frees 48 leftist rebels in an effort to end the insurgency.

ISRAEL/PALESTINE The sixth round of Middle East peace talks ends inconclusively in Washington.

CHINA For the first time since 1949, Tibet's Communist rulers approve the reincarnation of a living Buddha.

ANGOLA The first multiparty election after three decades of war takes place peacefully

OCTOBER

THAILAND Chuan Leekpai is sworn in as prime minister of Thailand with an all-male cabinet of 48. He promises a new era of democracy.

MOZAMBIQUE President Chissano and Renamo leader Afonso Dhlakama sign a peace treaty to end the 16-year civil war that has devastated the country and left more than a million people dead.

UNITED KINGDOM Oxfam marks its 50th anniversary.

SOMALIA The UN begins food air-drops in remote famine-stricken regions.

CAMBODIA In a defiant anti-UN show the Khmer Rouge blows up two bridges, cutting off traffic to the north and effectively creating its own zone.

SRI LANKA 160 die in attacks by rebels in the northern Polonnaruwa district.

EGYPT An earthquake near Cairo kills 45 and renders 25,000 homeless.

SOUTH AFRICA The ANC admits having tortured in its own detention camps.

PALESTINE/ISRAEL The seventh round of Arab-Israeli talks opens in Washington.

BANGLADESH School children as young as 14 caught cheating in exams can be jailed for up to 10 years under a law approved by Parliament.

INDIA The World Bank may withdraw funding from the \$1,200 million Narmada Dam unless New Delhi can draft a resettlement plan within the next six months for more than 250,000 people affected by the controversial project.

WORLD Worldwide protests mark the 500th anniversary of Columbus's arrival in the New World. Rigoberta Menchu, a



Guatemalan campaigner for the rights of indigenous people, is awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

NOVEMBER

ANGOLA UNITA rebels go on the rampage after they lose the UN-monitored election. The country descends into renewed civil war and serious food shortages appear in some regions. The Government refuses to allow food aid into rebel areas until UNITA accepts its election defeat.

UNITED STATES Bill Clinton wins the presidency and announces there will be no change in foreign policy.

EAST TIMOR The new Indonesian governor says more people should have been killed in the Dili massacre a year ago. Rebel leader Jose Ramos Horta says independence is inevitable and not far away.

ASIA AIDS will kill two million Asians by the end of the decade, says the World Health Organization.

LIBERIA A Nigerian-led alliance imposes economic sanctions against the factions in the Liberian civil war. Nigeria sends in more troops. The fighting escalates.

CAMBODIA The head of the UN peacemaking effort in Cambodia admits the peace agreement isn't working due to Khmer Rouge non-compliance.

CHILE Two heads of the secret police under Pinochet are charged with the 1976 murder of socialist foreign minister Orlando Letelier.



BURMA/MYANMAR Aung San Suu Kyi, 1991's Nobel Peace Prize winner, starts a

hunger strike in her fight for democracy.

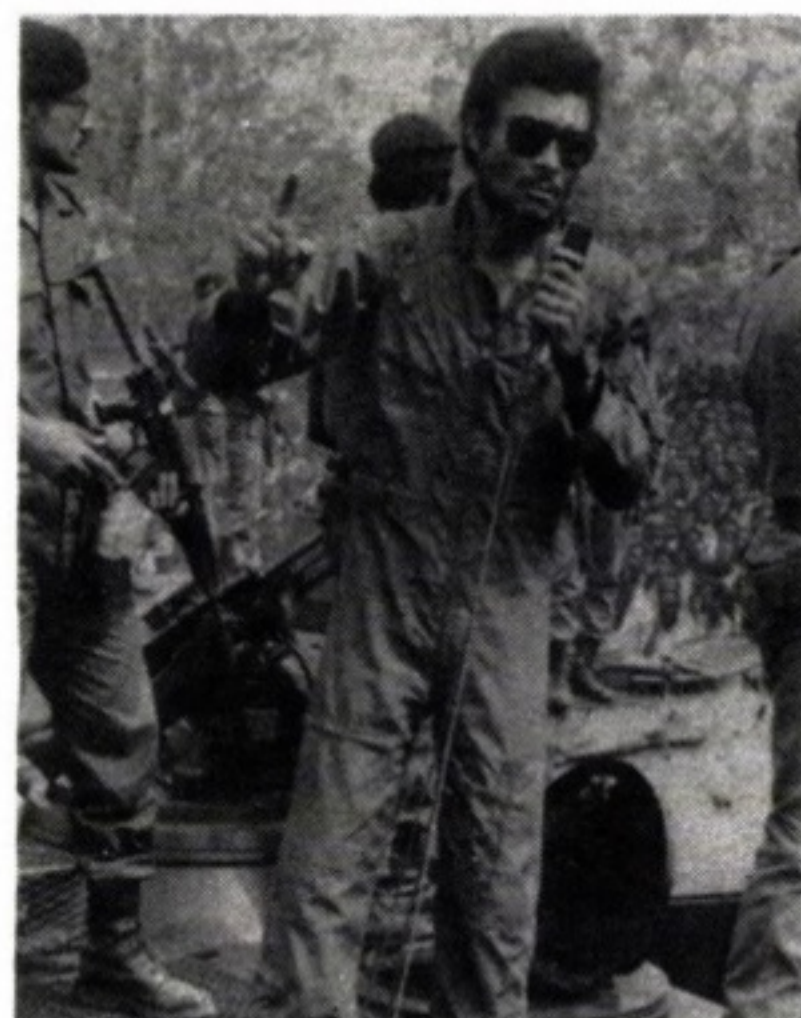
JORDAN A popular Muslim fundamentalist MP is given 20 years' hard labour for membership of an illegal group and possession of explosives. There is suspicion he has been set up to stem the fundamentalist tide in advance of next year's elections. King Hussein later pardons him.

BRAZIL President Collor is charged with conspiracy and corruption and faces up to 11 years in jail.

KURDISTAN The foreign ministers of Turkey, Iran and Syria, all countries with significant Kurdish populations, band together to denounce the Kurds' moves towards self-government within Iraq.

WORLD A UN-led conference in Copenhagen commits the world to phasing out ozone-damaging CFCs by 1996, four years earlier than planned.

SOUTH AFRICA Evidence mounts of a state dirty tricks operation against the ANC sanctioned at the highest levels of the army. President de Klerk announces a deadline of March 1994 for the end of white minority rule.



GHANA Jerry Rawlings wins the presidential election after 11 years of non-elected power.

NIGERIA President Babangida announces for the third time that free elections will be postponed, this time until August 1993, eighth anniversary of his seizure of power.

PAKISTAN Benazir Bhutto leads an anti-government march. She is arrested and banished for a month from Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

PHILIPPINES The last US ship leaves Subic Bay, ending nearly a century of US military involvement.

SOMALIA The US announces it may send 30,000 troops to oversee distribution of aid.

VENEZUELA The second coup attempt in a year by rebel soldiers is put down but 169 people are killed.

WORLD After months of squabbling between the US and Europe a new GATT agreement looks likely. The implications for the nations of the South are ignored throughout the wrangling.

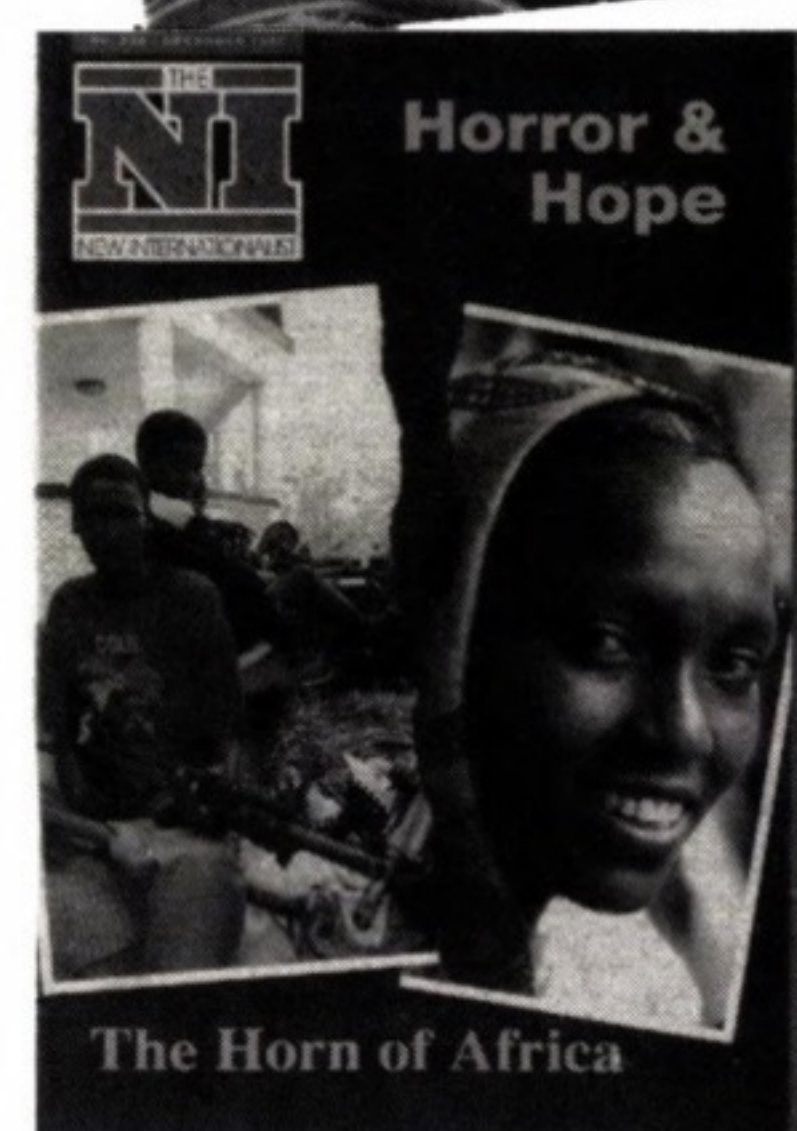
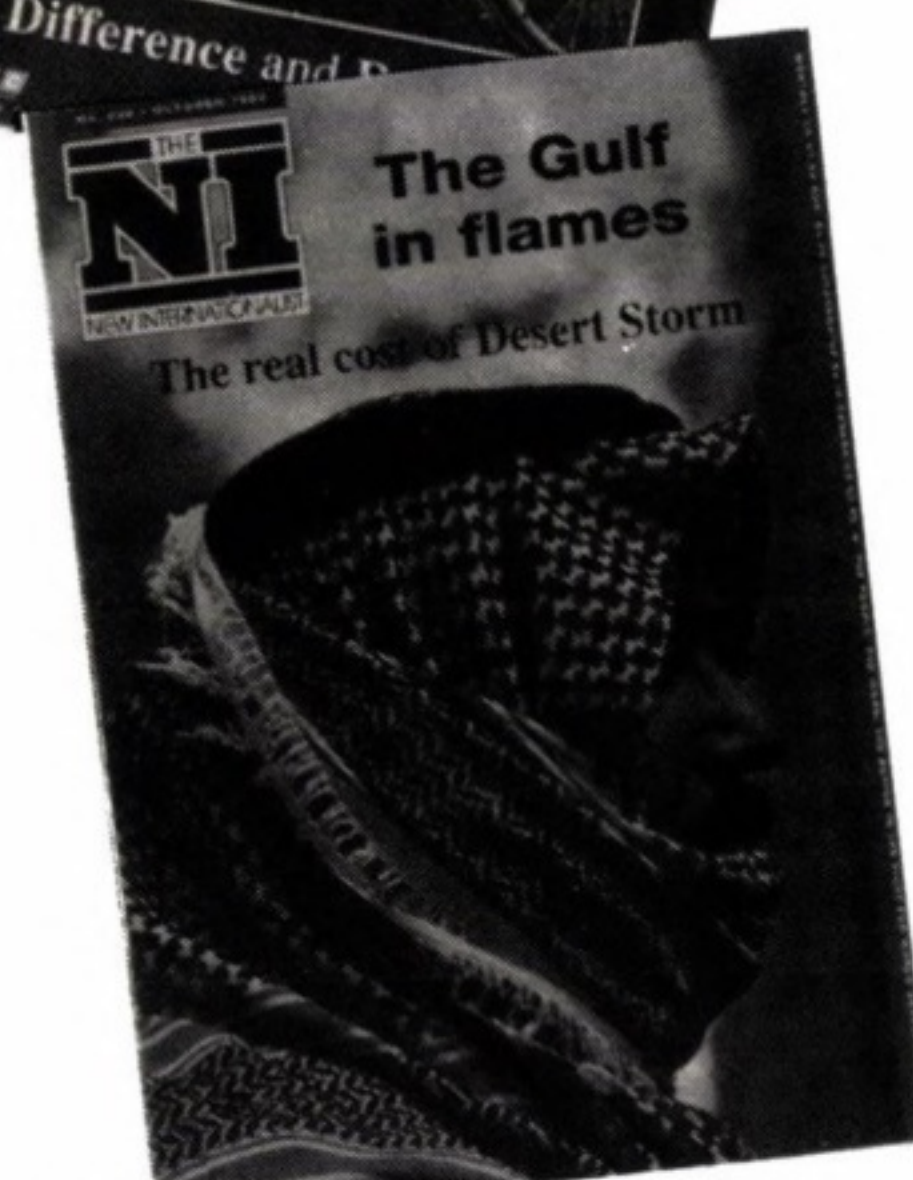
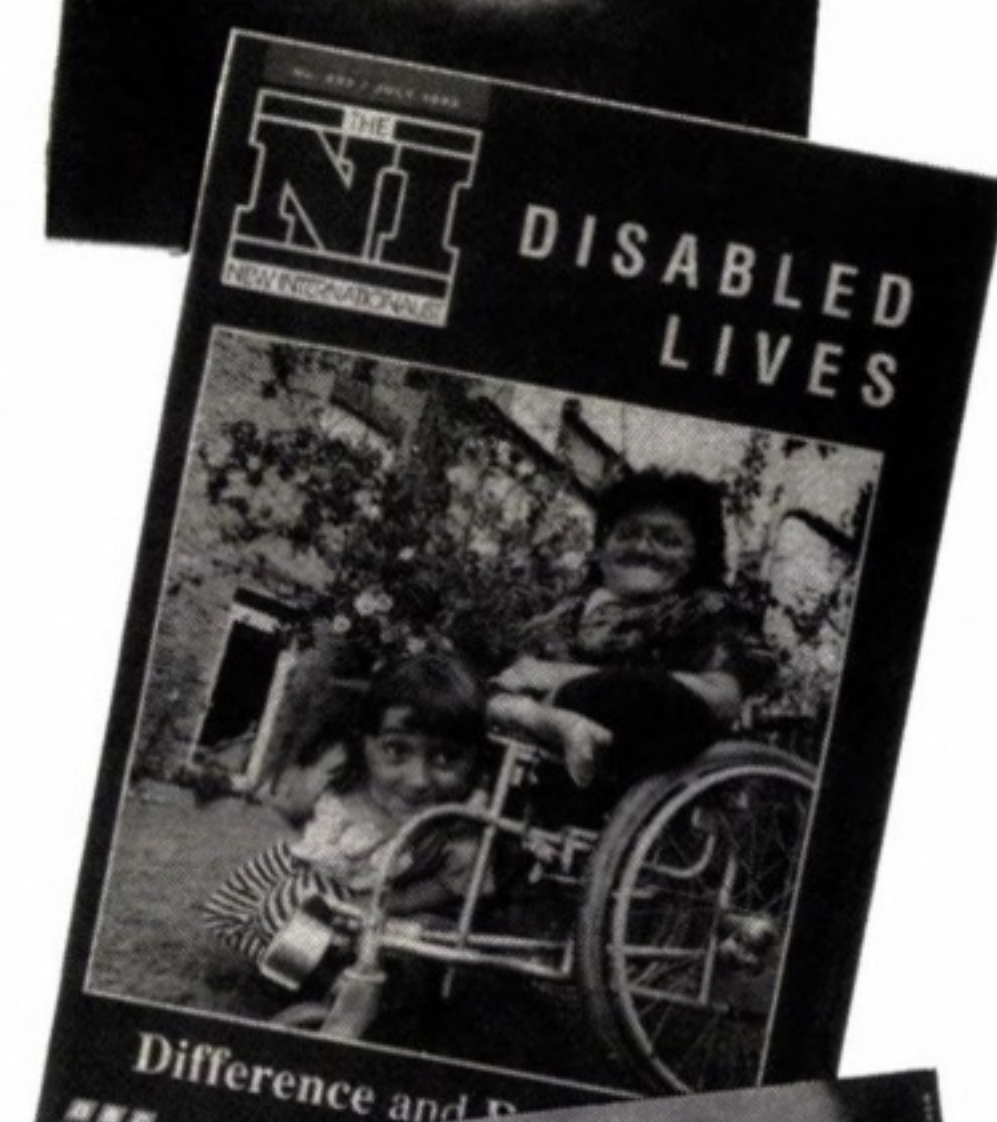
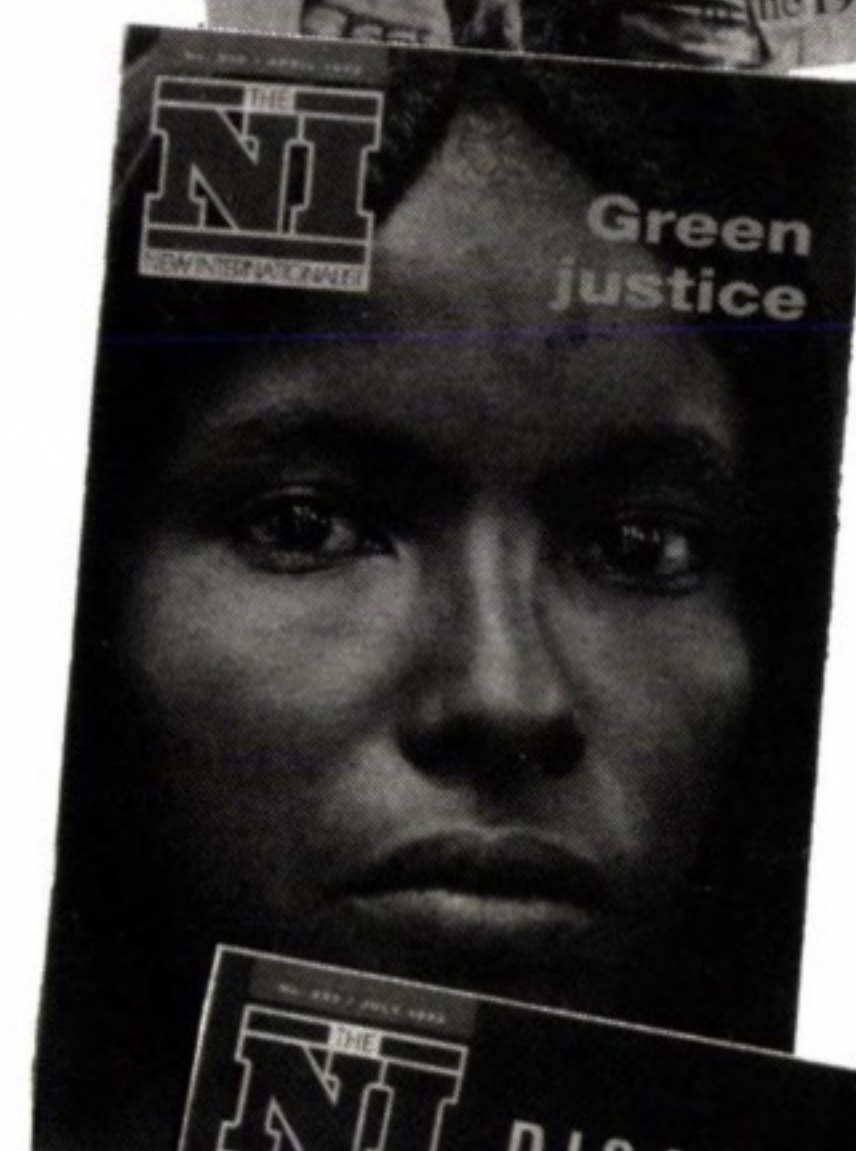
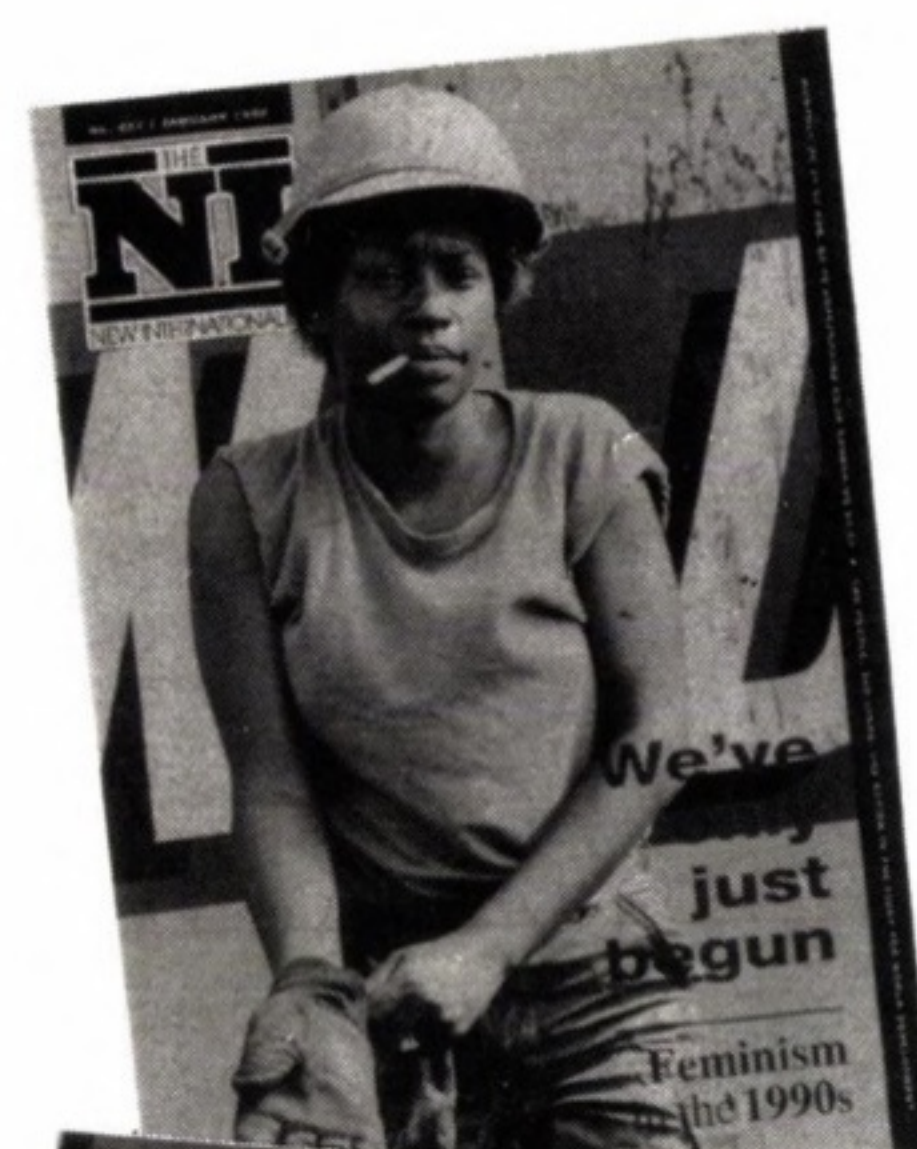
INDEX 1992

Africa					
AIDS spread	Aug:	31			
magic	Nov:	11			
women's poverty	Jan:	20			
Afghanistan					
refugee women	Jan:	22			
Agriculture					
'ghost acres'	Apr:	34			
Aid					
alternative trading	Feb:	16			
are relief workers puppets?	Feb:	13			
how voluntary aid works	Feb:	24			
AIDS					
& human rights abuses	Mar:	7			
controversy in Cuba	May:	35			
Japanese myths	Apr:	29			
spread in Africa	Aug:	31			
Amazon					
ecology	Apr:	20			
Yanomami initiation	Nov:	13			
Animals					
anti-vivisection ad banned	Nov:	31			
cruelty-free apparel	May:	34			
fish farming	Aug:	20			
fishes' dreams story	Jan:	37			
flies on ceilings	Apr:	34			
industrial fishing	Aug:	26			
Project Tiger	Dec:	29			
Ugandan killings	Mar:	31			
US hunters to donate meat	Feb:	30			
Aotearoa/New Zealand					
Japanese & Maori interests	May:	21			
pronunciation	Sep:	34			
Argentina					
country profile	Jan:	38			
identifying the dead	Apr:	30			
Arms					
Saudis arm Afghans	Jan:	32			
Australia					
Aboriginal protest	Feb:	30			
aboriginal land victory	Nov:	30			
Japanese expansion	May:	20			
land-rights hope	Aug:	30			
sewage contamination	Aug:	25			
sex worker	Jan:	14			
Bangladesh					
Oxfam in	Feb:	12			
rural campaigner	Jan:	21			
Bhutan					
Buddhists kick out Hindus	Jun:	31			
Bolivia					
progress of four sisters	Jun:	35			
Book reviews					
A Burnt-Out Case	Dec:	33			
A Green History of the World	Aug:	32			
African Radio Plays	Feb:	32			
Ancient Futures	May:	32			
At the Desert's Edge	Mar:	32			
Beyond the Limits	Dec:	33			
Beyond the Storm	Jun:	32			
Conflicts of Interest	Apr:	32			
Deterring Democracy	May:	32			
East Timor - a Tragedy	Nov:	32			
Memory of Fire	Feb:	33			
Promised Lands	Jul:	32			
Revolution from Within	Sep:	32			
Roots	Jul:	33			
Tales of the Heart	Apr:	32			
The Golden Notebook	Jun:	33			
The Harp and the Shadow	Oct:	33			
The Pregnant Virgin	Apr:	33			
The Right to Choose	Jun:	32			
The Redundancy of Courage	Nov:	32			
The Trade Trap	Jun:	32			
The Third Revolution	Oct:	32			
Theology and Feminism	Mar:	32			
Wealth Beyond Measures	May:	32			
When Humans Roamed...	Jan:	34			
Women Who Love Too Much	Aug:	33			
Botswana					
combatting hunger	Mar:	22			
Brazil					
business' eco-babble	Feb:	31			
country profile	Aug:	36			
Bulgaria					
landowners kill	Oct:	31			
Lutzenberger sacked	Jun:	30			
mosquitoed Tucurui	Jul:	31			
Oxfam in	Feb:	10			
rubber tappers' ecology	Apr:	20			
Yanomami triumph	Mar:	29			
Burma/Myanmar					
infant soldiers	Oct:	30			
Japan's support	May:	16			
refugee exodus	Jul:	30			
Cambodia					
minefields	Sep:	30			
returnees	Dec:	29			
Canada					
Atlantic fishery decline	Aug:	28			
De Havilland fined	Feb:	31			
Nellie Cournoyea	Apr:	30			
Oxfam Quebec	Feb:	26			
Oxfam Canada	Feb:	27			
Sea pollution in BC	Aug:	24			
Children					
abuse (story)	Feb:	35			
education, Pakistan	Nov:	3			
mortality rate	May:	34			
punishment ban, Germany	Apr:	31			
soldiers, Burma	Oct:	30			
UK runaways	Nov:	29			
UN breastfeeding initiative	Mar:	30			
Chile					
water produced from fog	Dec:	31			
guns for Yugoslavia	May:	29			
China					
disposal of dead	Aug:	30			
Clothing					
Panama hat	Mar:	34			
Saharan nomads	Mar:	34			
Costa Rica					
pesticides & banana growers	Aug:	29			
Cuba					
controversial AIDS program	May:	35			
US phone woes	Jun:	30			
Development					
<i>A Guide to the Ruins</i>			June		
Disability					
<i>Difference and Defiance</i>			July		
Drugs					
NI award	Sep:	31			
East Timor					
Dili massacre	Apr:	35			
book reviews	Nov:	32			
Economics					
and ecology	Apr:	26			
and population	Sep:	14			
coffee price collapse	Jan:	31			
discovery of poverty	Jun:	7			
economist's blind eye	Jun:	15			
GNP & GDP	Jan:	36			
GNP, inadequacy of	Jun:	18			
trickle-up theory	Aug:	30			
Ecuador					
country profile	Dec:	36			
fisherperson	Aug:	13			
Education					
Japanese school rules	May:	29			
Environment					
and economics	Apr:	26			
baobabs	Jan:	36			
car recycling	May:	30			
Chile's water from fog	Dec:	31			
consumption, North-South	Sep:	6			
Dutch reduce rubbish	Sep:	29			
environmental imperialism	Apr:	10			
eucalyptus' impact	Apr:	34			
excavating US tips	Jan:	32			
facts	Apr:	18			
false thinking on	Jun:	20			
green justice	Apr:	4			
Gulf War spillout	May:	29			
Gulf War villains	Oct:	24			
Japanese rainforest logging	Jan:	32			
Lake Victoria gasping	Dec:	29			
leaded versus unleaded	Aug, Sep:	34			
leaded versus unleaded	Oct, Dec:	34			
North-South dialogue	Apr:	24			
population and pollution	Sep:	8			
recycling poem	Apr:	12			
recycling in Sri Lanka	Apr:	22			
space-shuttle hazard	Aug:	30			
toxic waste, Philippines	Aug:	25			
trees and global warming	Nov, Dec:	34			
war and economic growth	Sep:	14			
World Bank dumping quote	Aug:	31			
Eritrea					
perils and promise	Dec:	14			
profile	Dec:	17			
war and hope	Dec:	12			
women's rights	Dec:	16			
Ethiopia					
profile	Dec:	13			
war and hope	Dec:	12			
Feminism					
<i>We've only just begun</i>	January				
Bible, feminist interpretation	Nov:	30			
gender bias, Pakistan	Mar:	12			
global sisterhood	Feb:	3			
radical mediumship	Nov:	23			
Film reviews					
1492 Conquest of Paradise	Dec:	31			
At Play in the Fields of the Lord	Apr:	32			
Christopher Columbus	Oct:	32			
City of Joy	Nov:	32			
Diplomatic Immunity	Jan:	34			
Grand Canyon	Jun:	32			
Hors la Vie	Feb:	32			
JFK	Mar:	32			
Juice	Sep:	32			
M*A*S*H	May:	33			
Night on Earth	Aug:	32			
Red Sunrise	Jan:	34			
Saturday Nt & Sunday Morn	Jan:	35			
Straight Out of Brooklyn	Sep:	32			
Te Rua	Jan:	34			
The Grapes of Wrath	Nov:	33			
The Lover	Jul:	32			
The Mambo Kings	Jun:	32			
The Power of One	Oct:	32			
Until the End of the World	May:	32			
Food					
famine, Somalia	Dec:	8			
hunger myth	Dec:	11			
war and famine	Dec:	26			
worldwide food survey	Mar:	22			
Fundamentalism					
refugee Afghan women	Jan:	22			
Gays					
persecuted in Iran	Mar:	10			
Gender					
bias, Pakistan	Mar:	12			
Germany					
child punishment ban	Apr:	31			
Ghana					
fish smoker	Aug:	12			
Green justice					
<i>The South Speaks Out</i>	April				
Guatemala					
multinational manipulation	Sep:	31			
Gulf War					
<i>The Real Cost of Desert Storm</i>	October				
development's final curtain	Jun:	26			
environmental damage	May:	29			
Haiti					
coup & Tonton Macoutes	Jun:	29			
voodoo	Nov:	21			
Health					
AIDS spread in Africa	Aug:	31			
Cuba's AIDS programme	May:	35			
human sperm count drops	Jun:	30			
India's train of medics	Nov:	31			
Japanese AIDS myths	Apr:	29			
private medical profits	Jan:	31			
worldwide health survey	Mar:	14			
risk from lab coats	Jun:	31			
trepanation	Nov, Dec:	34			
UN breastfeeding initiative	Mar:	30			
Zimbabwe's tobacco	Nov:	29			
History					
development	Jun:	4			
feminism	Jan:	24			
Gulf War	Oct:	6			
Japan	May:	22			
Oxfam	Feb:	20			
Honduras					
fishing clashes	May:	31			
rainforest deal	Mar:	31			
Hong Kong					
Chinese takeover	Aug:	30			
Horn of Africa					
<i>Horror and Hope</i>	December				
Human rights					
<i>A Second NI Olympics</i>	March				
electrical torture	Aug, Nov:	34			
in Ethiopia	Dec:	28			
Palestinians in Kuwait	Jan:	31			
repression in Saudi Arabia	May:	31			
India					
aborting female fetuses	Apr:	29			
autonomous Oxfam India	Feb:	23			
bogus advert	Dec:	31			
disability and poverty	Jul:	24			
dubious written word	Jul:	3			
ethnic unrest	Apr:	3			
Narmada climb-down	Sep:	29			
Narmada protest	Apr:	16			
Project Tiger	Dec:	29			
restructuring poverty	Mar:	3			
Sikh shoot-out	Sep:	30			
train of medics	Nov:	31			
Westernized kids	Sep:	30			
women vigilantes	Oct:	30			
Indigenous people					
indigenous wisdom	Apr:	27			
Nellie Cournoyea	Apr:	30			
Yanomami initiation	Nov:	13			
Indonesia					
Dili massacre	Apr:	35			
forestry warning	Jul:	31			
Japanese yen for tuna	May:	15			
Malaysia's apology	Dec:	31			
Iran					
persecution of gays	Mar:	10			
Iraq					
sanctions damage	Feb:	30			
soldiers' accounts of war	Oct:	11			
Islam					
croissant	Oct:	34			
stereotypes of	Aug:	35			
Japan					
<i>Prisoners of Prosperity</i>	May				
rent a 'family'	Dec:	30			
workaholics & spare time	Jan:	31			
Jordan					
Gulf War and West	Oct:	15			
Kuwait					
Palestinians hounded	Jan:	31			
post-war hell	Oct:	25			
Language					
'Dutch terms'	Sep:	34			
disability words	Jul:	28			
Earth Summit lingo	Jul:	31			
Latin America					

Lesotho		
country profile	Apr:	36
Libya		
stopping flies	Apr:	30
Malaysia		
apologising to Indonesia	Dec:	31
country profile	Oct:	36
tourism, Redang	Aug:	11
Media		
bias on population	Sep:	12
disability advertisements	Jul:	20
direction of writing	Jun:	34
Earth Summit lingo	Jul:	31
hunger myths	Dec:	11
images in charity ads	Feb:	8
Latin American soaps	Jan:	32
misleading public, Gulf War	Oct:	12
stereotyping Islam	Aug:	35
subliminal advertising	Apr:	29
The Sun's psychic	Nov:	22
'Dutch' terms	Sep:	34
Men		
New Age patriarchs	Jan:	29
nipples	Jun, Jul:	34
worker with men who rape	Jan:	30
Mexico		
country profile	May:	36
fans to shift smog	May:	30
soda-pop consumption	Aug:	29
US border crossings	Jul:	29
vaccination campaign	Jul:	29
Multinationals		
eco-babble in Brazil	Feb:	31
Guatemalan manipulation	Sep:	31
Honduran rainforests	Mar:	31
Music reviews		
A Week in the Real World	Nov:	32
Bahia Black	Oct:	32
Black Umfolosi	Aug:	32
Buffy Sainte-Marie	Jun:	32
Hassell/Farafina	Jan:	33
Kronos Quartet	Jul:	32
Olodum	Oct:	32
Public Enemy	Feb:	32
Rai Rebels	Sep:	33
Sinead O'Connor	Dec:	32
The Clash	Mar:	33
The History of Indipop	May:	33
Women of Wassoulou	Apr:	32
Yothu Yindi	Aug:	32
Youssou N'Dour	Sep:	32
Nepal		
uneasy Everest	Oct:	31
Netherlands		
car recycling	May:	30
reducing rubbish	Sep:	29
Nicaragua		
disabled revolutionaries	Jul:	12
new cathedral	Apr:	31
Nigeria		
Babangida's repression	May:	30
Oxfam		
<i>Changing Charity</i>	February	
Pakistan		
bonded labourers	Jul:	3
Christian children's education	Nov:	3
dowry deaths	Sep:	3
generation gap	Dec:	3
gun law	Aug:	3
ragpicking women	Oct:	3
Paraguay		
country profile	Mar:	36
Paranormal		
<i>Magical Mystery Tour</i>	November	
Peace		
peace movement, Scotland	Oct:	27
People		
Archbishop Desmond Tutu	Jul:	35
Beethoven	Feb:	34
Boutros Boutros-Ghali	Mar:	30
Haile Selassie	Jan:	36
Idi Amin	Jan:	36
Queen Charlotte Sophia	Oct:	34

Peru		
battered wife	Jan:	17
Guzman's capture	Dec:	30
UK solidarity with	Aug:	31
Philippines		
banana trade with Japan	May:	26
fisherperson	Aug:	12
power from submarines	Jun:	30
toxic waste, Manila Bay	Aug:	25
US bases	Feb:	29
vanishing mangroves	Aug:	7
Politics		
Animal Farm satire	Oct, Nov:	35
Gandhi and Nehru	Jun:	15
left/right origins	May, Jun, Jul, Aug:	34
political participation	Mar:	17
Population		
<i>Sex, Lies and Global Survival</i>	September	
Power		
kingship	Mar:	35
Race		
Beethoven black?	Feb, Mar:	34
black feminists	Jan:	8
Jewish racism	Sep:	35
status of Zionism	Mar:	29
Refugees		
Afghan refugee women	Jan:	22
exodus from Burma	Jul:	30
Mexican plays	Jul:	29
Nepalis thrown out of Bhutan	Jun:	31
Religion		
Christian exorcism	Nov:	20
stereotypes of Islam	Aug:	35
Russia		
Animal Farm satire	Oct, Nov:	35
out of contraceptives	Dec:	30
scientists' sacrifice	Jul:	31
Saudi Arabia		
human rights abuses	May:	31
Science		
and the paranormal	Nov:	15
new toxicity tests	Apr:	29
quantum mechanics	Nov:	4
Sea		
<i>Coral Gardens & Ocean Blues</i>	August	
Senegal		
country profile	Feb:	36
Sex		
and disability	Jul:	8
Shelter		
worldwide housing survey	Mar:	21
Somalia		
famine and struggle	Dec:	8
profile	Dec:	9
South Africa		
BCCI's sanctions busting	Feb:	31
Black people's scarred legacy	Apr:	8
country profile	Nov:	36
disability movement	Jul:	13
feminist survivor	Jan:	9
Southern Africa		
drought, food shortages	Oct:	29
wall	Oct:	30
South Korea		
squatter clearance	Mar:	20
Sri Lanka		
fisherperson	Aug:	13
recycling	Apr:	22
Sudan		
aftermath of Gulf War	Oct:	16
Nuba in the crossfire	Dec:	20
profile	Dec:	21
Switzerland		
Geneva Convention origin	Jul:	34
Technology		
car running off manure	Jun:	34
Japan's technofixation	May:	14
space-shuttle hazard	Aug:	30
technology's control	Jun:	12

Thailand		
country profile	Jun:	36
slum clearing	Jan:	33
Tibet		
independence campaign	Mar:	29
Togo		
Eyadema's comeback	Dec:	30
Tourism		
and the sea	Aug:	8
consideration tips	Jul:	29
Trade		
Brazil nut price problems	Mar:	31
coffee crash	May:	30
GATTastrophe	May:	3
tobacco sales boom	Jun:	31
Transport		
origin of rickshaw	Feb:	34
Uganda		
killing of wild animals	Mar:	31
United Kingdom		
anti-vivisection ad banned	Nov:	31
child charities chasm	Sep:	29
NI's General Election view	Jun:	1
peace movement, Scotland	Oct:	27
plea for nomadism	Dec:	35
poverty in	Feb:	29
royals' salaries	Nov:	30
why kids run away	Nov:	29
young feminist	Jan:	27
United Nations		
arms and UN budgets	Sep:	31
breastfeeding initiative	Mar:	30
Gulf War fiasco	Oct:	20
United States		
advocacy in	Jan:	3
arms and UN budgets	Sep:	31
disabled Vietnam veteran	Jul:	22
drug users defy stereotypes	Dec:	31
excavating landfill tips	Jan:	32
human-rights bias	Mar:	8
hunters to donate deer	Feb:	30
killer cards	Jul:	31
LA computer bungle	May:	31
prison torture	Mar:	26
tobacco lobby	Mar:	30
trade restrictions	Mar:	29
Vanuatu		
country profile	Sep:	36
Voluntary aid		
facts	Feb:	18
how it works	Feb:	24
War		
Football War	Jan, Mar, May:	34
war and famine	Dec:	26
Women		
abortions, India	Apr:	29
Arabs, Gulf war	Oct:	8
Bible, feminist interpretation	Nov:	30
black maids, US	Sep:	35
dilemma of work, Japan	May:	17
dowry deaths, Pakistan	Sep:	3
facts	Jan:	18
global sisterhood	Feb:	3
Nellie Cournoyea	Apr:	30
poverty in Africa	Jan:	20
ragpickers, Pakistan	Oct:	3
rights in Eritrea	Dec:	16
UK-Peru sisterhood	Aug:	31
vigilantes, India	Oct:	30
Wangari Maathai	Apr:	23
Work		
cheap Asian labour	May:	10
cost of living	Jun:	29
Japan's workaholics	Jan:	31
Yemen		
position on Gulf war	Oct:	14
Zambia		
ancient skull dispute	Feb:	29
country profile	Jul:	36
Oxfam in	Feb:	11
Zimbabwe		
disabled people's struggle	Jul:	12
tobacco crop	Nov:	29



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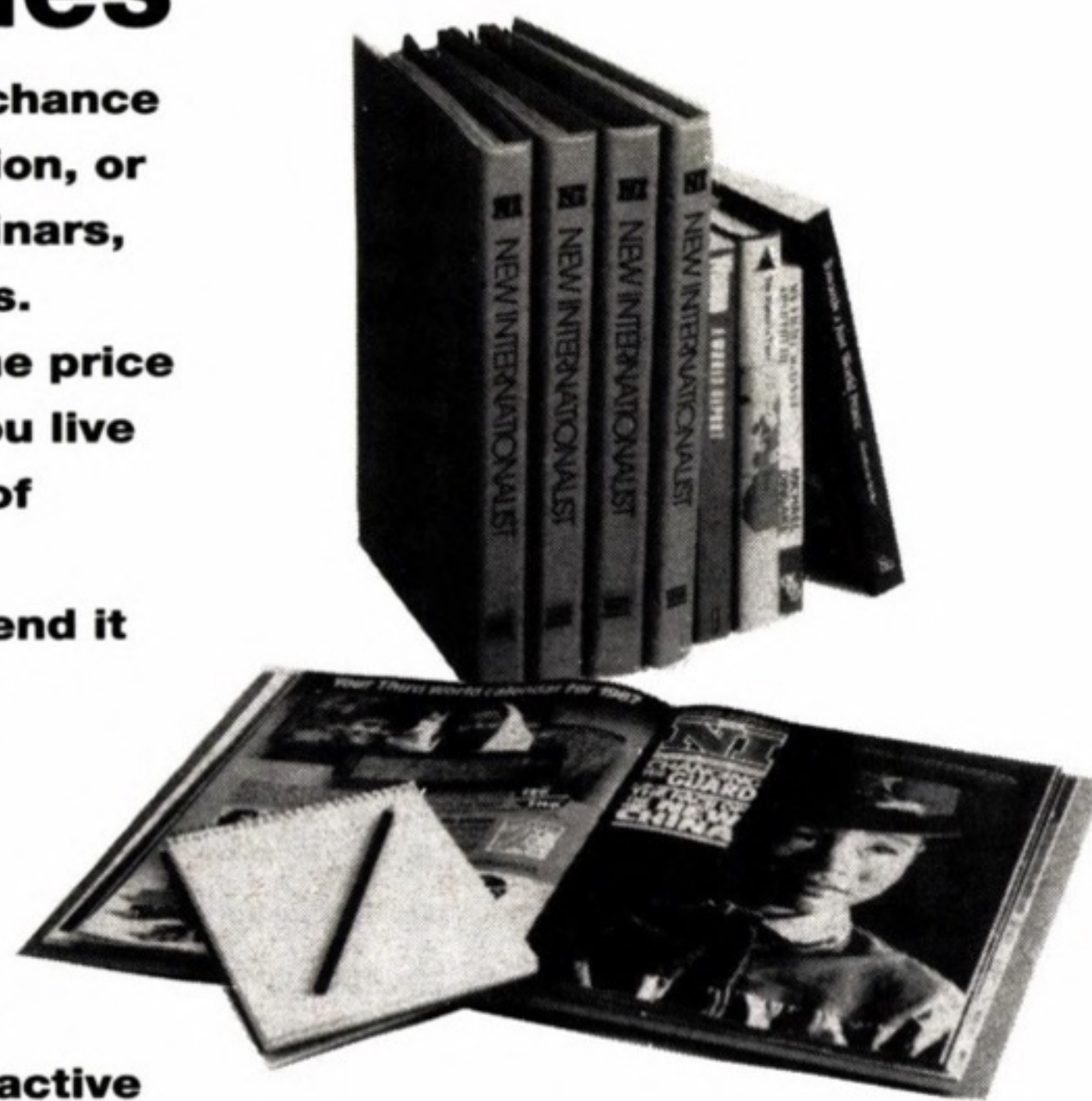


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Issue No.

- 101 **Uninvited Guests in the Pacific Islands**
105 **Sri Lanka**
115 **How To Get Ahead** - Bias and the Social Order
116 **Dissent in Indonesia**
120 **The Rains** - A Report From a Village in Burkina Faso .
122 **The Class System** - Education and the Lessons of Learning
128 **Outside the Circle** - The Denial of Minority Rights
130 **Force of Arms** - The Price of US Policy in Central America
131 **A Second Look** - Global Reporting in a Critical Light
133 **The Rise of the New Right**
135 **Trick or Treat** - The Sticky World of Food
136 **Looking Beyond Violence** - Armed Liberation or Non-Violence?
137 **It's a Rich Man's World** - How Money Makes its Mark
138 **Goodbye to Innocence** - Adolescence
141 **Slow Train to Patna** - A new Approach to Community Action
142 **Visions of Poverty and Wealth** - Tourism in the Third World
143 **Tough Choices for Today's Youth**
144 **You are the Artist**
145 **Black or White** - The Origins of Racism
146 **Everything Under Control** - Life in a Managed Society
147 **Market Forces** - Consumer Power in Today's World
152 **A Tale of Two Villages** - Thailand
153 **Living Socialism** - The Experience of the 80s
159 **Race Against Time** - Black South Africa Speaks
160 **Radical Lifestyles**
161 **Fear and Violence** - The Roots of Terrorism
165 **A Pill for Every Ill** - Cashing in on World Health
166 **Useful Work or Useless Toil** - The Future of Human Labour
167 **Exporting Illusion** - The New Imperialism
168 **Money Makes The World Go Round** - Finance for Beginners
169 **The Politics of Aids** - A Guide to Sexual Survival
170 **Changing The Guard** - The New Face of China
171 **What if the Greens Achieved Power** - The Politics of Ecology
172 **Unilever's Sticky Fingers** - Inside a Multinational
173 **Moonlit Money** - The Shady World of Underground Work
174 **Visions of Freedom** - A Journey Through Pinochet's Chile
175 **Birth of a New Man** - The Politics of Masculinity
176 **Families to Order** - Population and Human Rights
177 **Our Earth, Our Home** - Land Rights and Wrongs
178 **Life in the Shadows** - The Underside of New York

Issue No.

- 179 **Running for Rights** - An NI Olympics
- 180 **Wisdom & Wealth** - The Great Education Hoax
- 181 **Life Sentence** - The Politics of Housework
- 182 **Our Future in Their Hands** - Method and Madness
in Science
- 183 **From the Grassroots** - Solving the
Development Puzzle
- 184 **Tree of Life** - Stop the Chainsaw Massacre
- 185 **Can I Take Your Picture** - The Strange World
of Photography
- 186 **Back from the Brink** - Native Peoples and the Future
- 187 **Blow by Blow** - Accounting for Personal Violence
- 188 **The Politics of Greed** - And the Path Beyond
- 189 **Dicing With Debt** - The Third World Dilemma
- 190 **Moscow Circus** - Gorbachev's Command
Performance
- 191 **Say, Write, Scream** - Language Lives
- 192 **Mozambique** - The Right to Survive
- 193 **The Globe at a Glance** - Wallchart Edition
- 195 **Car Chaos**
- 196 **History of the World**
- 197 **Peru** - State of Fear
- 198 **Breaking the Grip of Cancer**
- 199 **Suffering Under David's Star**
- The Palestine-Israel Conflict
- 200 **Two Decades in the Life of the World**
- Anniversary Issue
- 201 **Pride and Prejudice** - Homosexuality
- 202 **Captives of Design** - Modern Architecture
- 203 **Shopping for the Planet** - The Green Consumer
- 204 **Trade Wars** - The Poor step up
- 206 **Global Warming**
- 207 **Thirsty for Life** - The Power of Water
- 208 **Burden of Hope** - Africa in the 1990s
- 209 **The Fear of Madness**
- 210 **Reaching for Certainty** - Fundamentalism
- 211 **East Meets West** - North Forgets South
- 212 **The Secret Life of the Apple**
- 213 **What Next?** - The End of Ideology
- 214 **Pinstripes and Poverty** - Inside the World Bank
- 215 **Animal Rights** - Targets of tyranny
- 216 **Vietnam** - After the storm
- 217 **Biotechnology** - Test tube coup
- 218 **Starve Trek** - The notion pictures
- 219 **People of the Amazon** - Thirst for Justice
- 220 **Taxed to Death** - The Great Revenue Robbery
- 221 **The Armed Agenda** - Bang, Bang You're Dead
- 222 **Assailed by the Cyclone** - Third World Disasters
- 223 **The Dispossessed** - Refugees
- 224 **The Crazy War on Drugs** - The damage done
- 225 **Raw Food** - People, Plants & Politics
- 226 **Hidden History** - Columbus & the Colonial Legacy

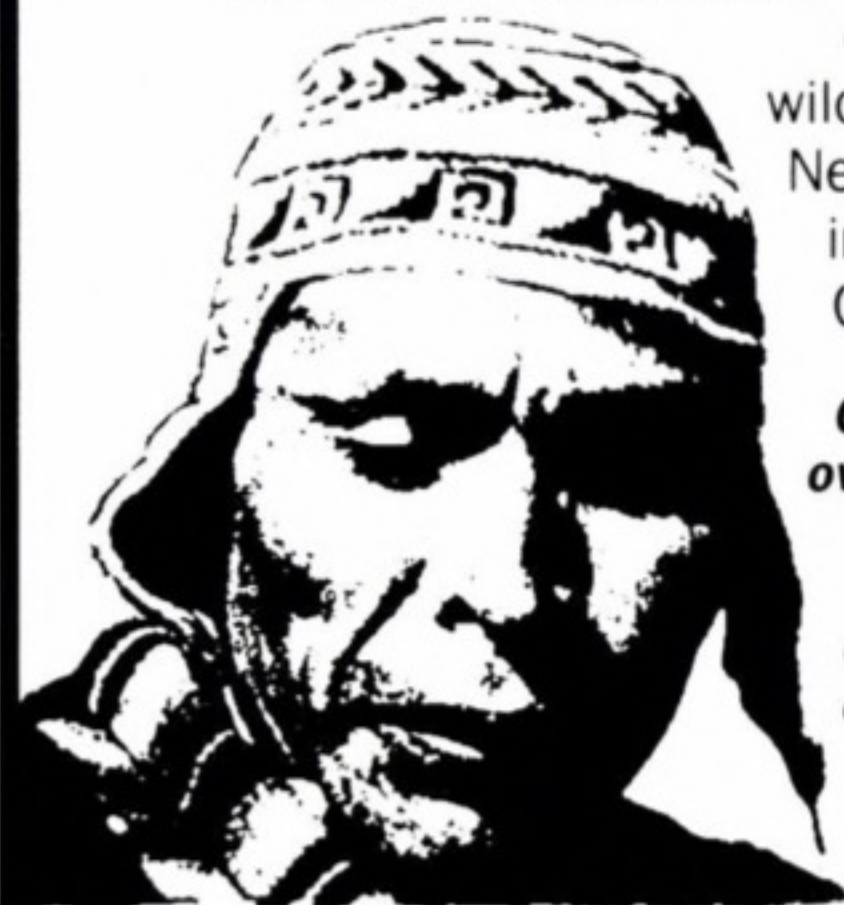
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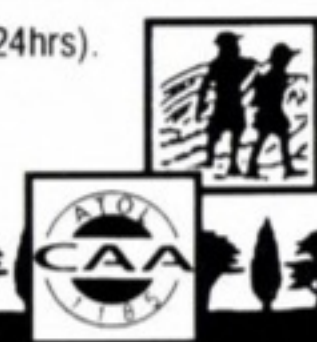
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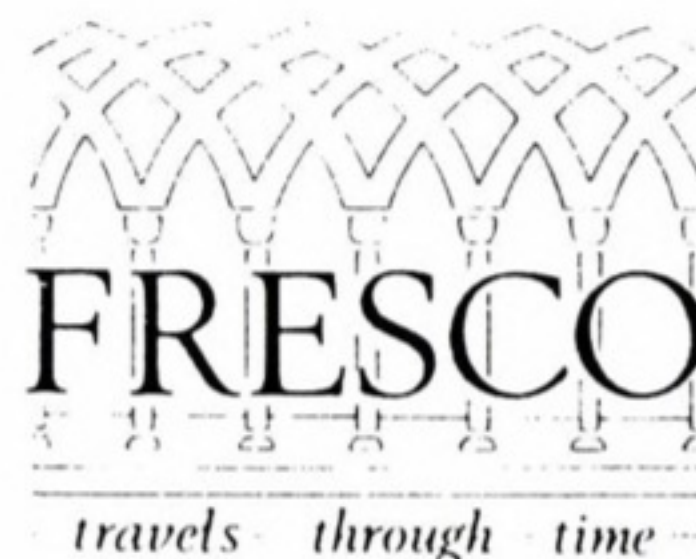
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C O N T E N T S

**Hard work 4**

David Ransom imagines what might lie behind a blind spot in his view of working life.

A plague of heroes 7

A gold rush brings biblical scenes to Serra Pelada in Brazilian Amazônia.

Ways of seeing – ways of working 10

There's more than one way of looking at a picture, says RE Pahl.

Constructing destruction 11

Women building the Narmada Dam in India are at the centre of environmental controversy.

Maids and Madams 14

'How can our children dream of things they never see us do?' asks Sindiwe Magona of the new South Africa.

WORK – THE FACTS 16**Photo spread 18**

Sugar-cane workers in Cuba.

Inside the volcano 20

Defying the elements to bring sulphur from the belly of the Kawak Idjen volcano in Indonesia.

My pictures look like my life 23

Sebastião Salgado talks about his work and what inspires his photographs.

**The wages of work 24**

Casting a quizzical eye over the product of our labour with Eduardo Galeano.

Flying pigeons forever 26

Bicycles from China rule the world.

Letters 2**Letter from Lahore 3****Updates 29****Reviews: plus Marvin Gaye classic 32****Curiosities 34****Endpiece: by Juley Howard 35****Country profile: Israel 36**

FRONT COVER PHOTO: CAPPING THE OIL WELLS IN KUWAIT
AFTER THE GULF WAR BY SEBASTIÃO SALGADO / MAGNUM

THIS MONTH'S THEME

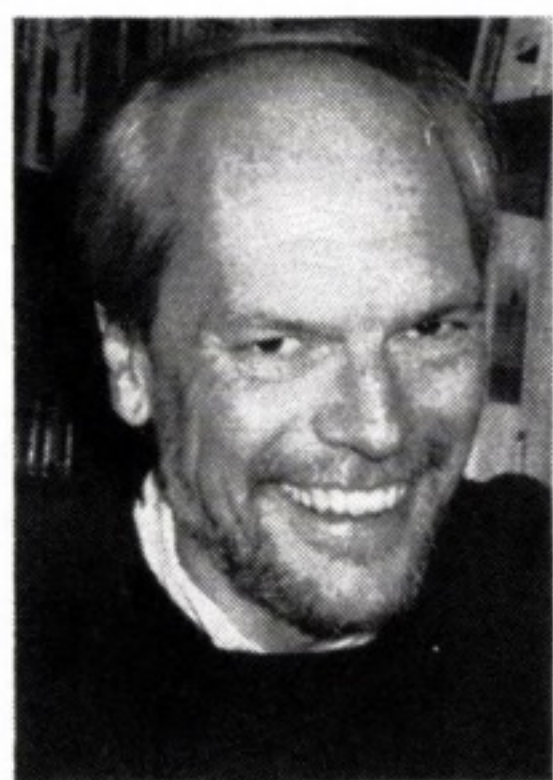
Hard work

FROM THIS MONTH'S EDITOR

IN almost every magazine I do I come up with pictures by the great Brazilian photographer Sebastião Salgado. When you thumb through agency picture files you can't see the name of the photographer on the back, so it's not a matter of prejudice. It just so happens that when I find a great picture that's perfect for the text it's intended to accompany, Salgado's name is often on the other side of it.

A former editor here, Peter Stalker, began the July 1988 magazine on photography by observing that 'photos are usually something of an afterthought when producing an issue of the NI'. This issue, like that one, turns the process around and begins with images rather than words. But rather than looking at photography itself we focus on work, a conventional NI-style theme.

This is asking a lot. When we're planning a magazine we tease out half a dozen central points that we want it to make. Images operate in a different way. They suggest possibilities, a range of responses, many of them unconscious. Our designers regularly complain that we react to visual images too lazily – 'Oh, I like that!' or 'That looks awful!'. Too often we're content to remain entirely subjective in our visual judgements. Composing a neat pattern of messages from a series of brilliant images is like trying to take a photograph of a great piece of music.



On the other hand, why should we concede to the advertising industry the prerogative to use images as efficient messengers? If what we want to convey is important to us we must surely want to use the most effective possible means of conveying it. We have to be wary of the easy sentiments that powerful images can provoke, the pity or glorification we can be

induced to feel when looking at very hard work being done by someone else. But there is a quite extraordinary lack of powerful yet truthful images of work in our daily lives. This magazine tries in some small measure to put matters right.

Well, you will have to judge for yourself. For me this has been a deeply satisfying experience, the magazine I have most enjoyed doing. It marks, by the way, something of a farewell to black and white photographs in the NI. From March the magazine will be using full colour throughout. After 20 years in monotone an era will have come to an end, and I can think of no better way of marking it than with Salgado's wonderful images. I am very grateful to Magnum Photos, UK, for all their help in making this possible.

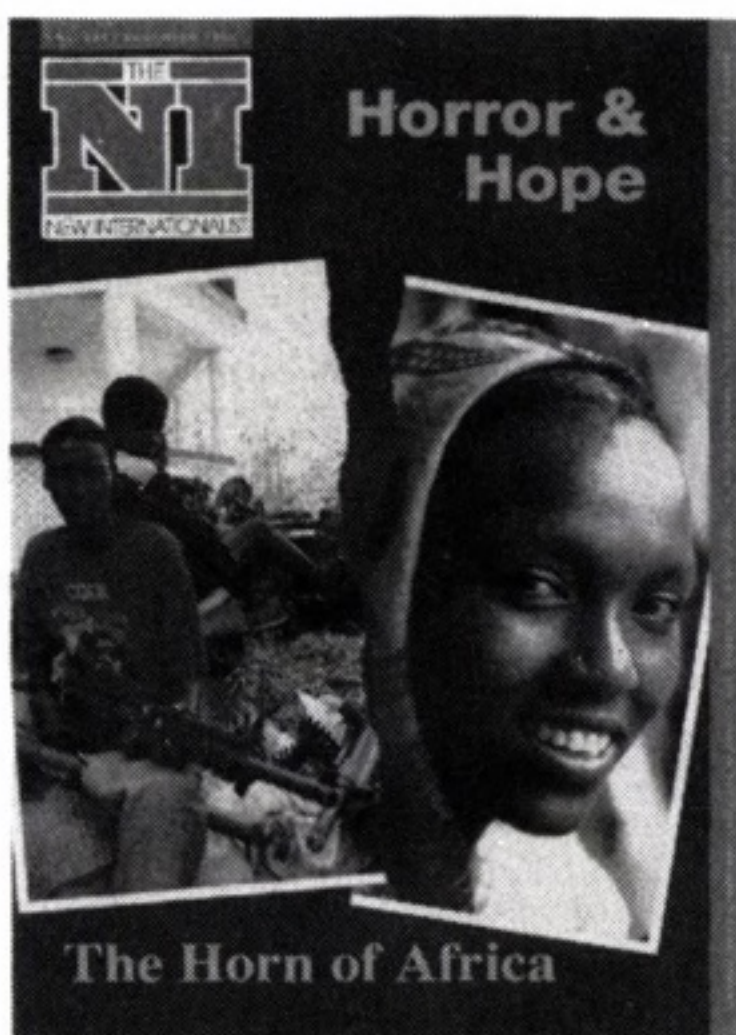
I began by thinking of 'work' as slightly too solemn and dull a topic for a good magazine. I ended by seeing more clearly the great beauty – which also tells us what's wrong with the ugliness – of what we make and how we make it, day by day, at work. Salgado's photographs have worked a kind of magic on me.

David Ransom.

*David Ransom
for the New Internationalist Co-operative.*

Hard lesson

God knows, when you're staring the situation in Somalia straight in the face it's hard not to flinch and find a sudden excuse to find out what films you're reviewing this month. But I thought you did a pretty good job of finding enough



hope to set against the horror in your issue on *The Horn of Africa* (NI 238).

I find the Eritrean and Tigrayan struggles inspiring for what they have achieved against all odds and for the way they seem to be avoiding the old traps set for revolutionary victors. But what is the lesson we're supposed to learn from their success? Should disenfranchised minorities all over Africa be taking up arms as they did to assert their own independence? Surely that will only create more of the conflict and famine you describe?

Lisa Erhardt
Leuven, Belgium

No more fantasy

Please do not do any more paranormal issues (*Magical Mystery Tour* NI 237). The normal ones are quite good enough for me.

Photographs of materializations have been shown to be fakes. Ghosts have never been detected by proper scientific equipment. Levitation always happened some time in the past. Apparent confirmation of astrology could be due to the operation of other factors, not the stars, but the weather and/or food eaten at particular times of the year. The NI will come into disrepute if it publishes, as the November issue does in the centre spread, fact and fantasy side by side.



The **New Internationalist** welcomes your letters. But please keep them short. They may be edited for purposes of space or clarity. Include a home telephone number if possible and send your letters to the nearest editorial office. The address is inside the front cover.

By the way, if Nina Silver experiences the universe as a loving force there is work for her to do with (male) soldiers in Bosnia and Somalia. They hardly seem to experience it as such.

Allan Tuffin
London, UK

Sexism not Satan

I found your issue on the paranormal (NI 237) very interesting and open-minded. I do agree with Susan Blackmore that the paranormal might be normal after all.

Satanism indeed! My unbelief in Satan (an Anti-God) as real cost me my first girlfriend long ago! Evil and sin are another matter to do with power, sexism and racism; nothing to do with a Mr or Ms Satan.

All this makes me lateral-think: when Jesus said that he was fed up with his contempo-

raries, did he mean that he was fed up with playing the 'Paranormal Wiz Kid' or 'Miracle Worker'.

Rev Cesar Guidi
Cowley Road Methodist Church,
Oxford, UK

Occult victims

Psychiatrists and counsellors, religious or not, agree that even trivial contact with the paranormal/occult can lead to depression, schizophrenia and manifestations of epilepsy, greater contact with sexual deviation, murder and suicide. No article in NI 237 mentioned that very often these victims of the weird and the wonderful are children sometimes as young as seven, innocently using ouija boards, tarot cards and crystal balls to perform séances and meet with the dead. No article mentioned the number of years of counselling it very often

requires to rehabilitate and restore these children to mental health after their probings in the paranormal.

Monica Lowenberg
Wembley, UK

White lies

Your *Country Profile* on South Africa (NI 237) falls rather below your usual standards. It should have mentioned that the 'focal point' of apartheid, the racist 'homelands', still exists. Your section on culture gives the impression that whites settled first whereas the Zulus and their *nguni* ancestors had been settled for several centuries before the whites arrived. Such facts are vital, for it is by grossly falsifying them that the white regime has for 30 years tried to justify apartheid, as well as those fake 'homelands'.

Len Clarke
Uxbridge, UK

One vote each but...

Your *Country Profile* on South Africa (NI 237) should be commended because it gives a healthy indication of the complex nature of the situation South Africa faces in the post-apartheid era.

A centralizing unitary state will be unable to absorb the many contradictory social strains and tensions currently emerging in South Africa. Only a federally based diffuse structure of government, centred upon one person one vote, can provide the checks and balances and safety valves which are such a necessity to ensure that a future South Africa is not only democratic, but proves that no one group can ever exploit another again.

Marc Gordon
International Freedom Foundation,
London, UK

Outlawed gay

Speaking as a gay male I suggest that Eric Stockton (*Letters* NI 236) keeps his ideas to himself and allows nature to take her/his course. He/she has done quite well so far! Homosexuality is still illegal in Tanzania so please omit my name if you publish this.

Name withheld
Tanzania

Evolution evidence

Your issue on the paranormal (*Magical Mystery Tour* NI 237) demonstrates confusion, scepticism and gullibility in roughly equal measures.

The true test for paranormal 'powers' like telepathy, telekinesis, levitation, precognition and so on is not, as Richard Broughton suggests in his article, elaborate double-blind trials which produce results only marginally above statistical chance, but whether there is any historical or archaeological evidence for them. If these attributes had existed, they would have conferred an evolutionary advantage on their possessors which would have enabled them to out-compete everyone else and thereby ensure that the entire human species would long since have become telepathic and telekinetic too.

But it is not – which clearly suggests that the paranormal is not genuine, but rubbish, wish-fulfilment and self-delusion.

Joseph Nicholas
London, UK



Catholic convert

I read your issue on Population (*Sex, lies and global survival* NI 235) with considerable unease. Not many years ago I was a fervent Catholic who spoke and wrote against artificial birth control. I have a conscience now about many of my actions then. I am still a Catholic (of sorts) but a very critical one, and most critical of the Church's stance on birth control. To me, the murder of children on the streets of Rio de Janeiro is a direct consequence of the Church's teaching.

The land will not support increasing population; the surplus moves to the cities; the cities expand over the land leaving even less land to support the increasing population. Your issue does not face up to this problem.

Frank Dineen
Essex, UK

Garbage trailblazer

Population is a problem – it is not the only problem and not (yet) the biggest problem, but it is a problem. That other concerns – social and economic justice for all peoples, for example – exist and must be dealt with does not negate the importance of stabilizing the earth's population at or near (preferably below!) the current level.

On the other hand Anuradha Vittachi (NI 235) is clearly right that people in the North consume far too much and produce far too much waste. In the course of reading her articles I became curious about the precise amount of my own rubbish production. I find that in two-and-a-half years I have produced less than two kilograms of rubbish – a level I have maintained for most of my adult life. I can't help thinking that almost everyone else could do the same. I am appalled at the number of activists who 'can't be bothered' to recycle.

Robert Jones
Whatawhata, Australia

The views expressed on the letters page are not necessarily those of the NI.

LETTER from LAHORE

A faith apart

Christians in Pakistan have always had the dirtiest jobs but now they feel under physical threat too, according to Maria del Nevo.

BHANSA, Mahana and Mangal sit on a dry patch of grass in the shade of a tree. All three men bear the name Masih, which denotes their faith – it means 'Christian'. They are talking about work when I join them, probably a frequent topic of discussion given that they depend on occasional day labouring. 'You even have to pay bribes to do government-paid sweeping now – up to 20,000 rupees (\$750)!' says Mangal. 'If we had that kind of money we wouldn't have to sweep, we could start a business.'

Their tales of woe are familiar, common to the majority of Christians in Pakistan. These people work as bonded labourers on the brick kilns, live in isolated clusters of villages where they toil on the land, or, like these men, are packed into urban ghettos where they can only expect jobs as sweepers or sanitation workers.

A crowd gradually forms around us under the tree. I have come to talk to them about another threat to their well-being. Last year the Federal Shariat Court, Pakistan's highest Islamic legal body, amended the blasphemy laws and promised the death penalty for anyone found guilty of speaking out against Islam or the Holy Prophet.

Besides encouraging Muslims to report a Christian who has insulted the Prophet, the Court's decision has also given free rein to fanatics who are deluded into believing that by killing a member of a minority group they are fighting some kind of holy war. There have already been horrifying repercussions.

Earlier this year Naimat Ahmer, a teacher and Punjabi poet, was stabbed to death in his office in Faisalabad by a 16-year-old youth, who confessed that he killed Naimat following a poster campaign alleging that the poet had spoken against the Prophet. The youth was arrested – but not before his action had been openly praised by religious leaders.

An independent investigation by the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan, however, later revealed that the accusation of blasphemy had been used by local Muslims to oust Naimat from his school because he was a Christian. In July another man died under mysterious circumstances in Lahore Prison where he awaited sentencing for having converted to Christianity. No official investigations into his death have been pursued.

Bhansa, Mangal and Mahana tense a little when I turn the conversation to the topic of Islam and the blasphemy laws. 'There's a Muslim colony just over there,' says Mahana in a lowered voice, glancing over his shoulder. 'There's never really been any trouble but we can expect it now.' They talk with a tone of foreboding, although they shake their heads when I ask if they have heard of the murder of Naimat Ahmer.

Later that day I visit Padre Samuel and the local community council president, David Paul – two of the few formally educated people in the Christian colonies. 'Muslims and Christians can live side by side,' Padre Samuel tells me, 'we have done so peacefully for many years.'

So where does the trouble come from? 'From the mosques,' he says. 'The *maulvis* (priests) preach over their loudspeakers, saying that Jesus was not a prophet but an adulterer. They shout about the infidel West and in doing so try and work up a fever of hatred against Christianity and Christian people.'

'Education is the only answer for Muslims too,' says David Paul. 'Most of them don't trust the *maulvis* themselves. It's only the uneducated who will

be affected by the propaganda.'

There is a note of urgency in his words. In the past the *maulvis*' preaching has merely added to Christians' humiliation. Now, with the changes to the blasphemy laws, the danger is more acute.

'We've set up literacy classes,' Padre Samuel tells me. 'That's important because while our people remain ignorant they remain defenceless. They must be aware of laws which directly affect them.' I sit in on one such class in which women of all ages and both faiths are learning to read together. My spirits lift – but only a little. After all there are only 30 women here. I think about the saying that there is strength in numbers and about Naimat Ahmer who was savagely murdered because he had the audacity to work outside his own community.

'This is the only way,' Padre Samuel says beside me, as if reading my mind. 'It will be our only strength. If we retaliate in any other way then there will be a mass bloody slaughter.'

Maria del Nevo is a former NI staff member who now lives and works in Lahore.



ILLUSTRATION: MIRIAM MCCURDY



Hard work



ALL PHOTOGRAPHS IN THE CENTRAL SECTION
ARE BY SEBASTIÃO SALGADO / MAGNUM

*Pictures of work are hard to find. **David Ransom** detects a blind spot in our view of working life and imagines what might lie behind it.*

RECKON I've worked pretty hard all my life. Never harder, in fact, than when I was out of a job. To fend off anxiety, frustration and questions about what I was doing I told my friends I was writing a novel. Then, because they kept asking me what it was about, I had to start writing it. I began to work frantically, looking after my small daughter at the same time. The novel helped me to stay sane, I think, but I'm glad it never got published.

My first 'proper job' was in a bank in

Montevideo, Uruguay, and it was hard in a rather different way. It was really very boring indeed. We spent a great deal of time looking for extremely small amounts of money – which we never found – in huge haystacks of paper. I passed an entire week in the vaults counting hundreds of thousands of old and virtually worthless banknotes, suffocated by the smell of stale humanity that seeps from old money. I cannot picture this scene – only recall the smell.

This started me thinking about images

and work. Pictures of people working are strangely scarce. A couple of weeks ago I decided to conduct a brief, completely unscientific experiment. I went to London's National Gallery in search of paintings of people working. I climbed the posh mock-palatial staircase and strolled past the religious icons of the Renaissance centuries, on through the formal landscapes and portraits of the industrial era and off into the abstractions of today. I found just six pictures out of the hundreds on exhibi-



Left: Oiling the factory works in the former East Germany. **Above:** Vats of vetiver, a plant used to make French perfume on the island of La Réunion.

tion in which anyone was doing any work; and they included *Woman Scraping Parsnips* by Nicholas Maes (1655) and *Miss La La at the Cirque Fernando* by Edgar Degas (1879).

It's not that such pictures don't exist. I can think of several great paintings about work, by van Gogh for example. But for one reason or another they are not on display in the National Gallery. This is odd for a collection of the most treasured images of a European culture obsessed with work.

So I went home to look more carefully at the TV. There was someone tinkering with a car in a soap opera; a physiotherapist tending a wretched child in an 'asylum' on the Greek island of Leros. But for the most part I watched a procession of personalities, performers and players whose work it is to divert our minds from work.

Next morning I thumbed through the daily newspaper. Bill Clinton. Refugees in Bosnia. Football. Fashion. Cartoons. Much the same result. That evening I took out my own photo albums. Holidays. Friends. Family. Not a single snapshot in it of me, or anyone I know, doing anything even

remotely resembling our normal work.

There used to be a large, red, Russian poster in the 'Socialist Realist' tradition on my wall at home. At least this tradition used to show an interest in somewhat muscle-bound kinds of labour. But it was obliged to portray work as invariably heroic. It became, you might argue, even less convincing on the subject than *Miss La La at the Cirque Fernando*.

I completed my little survey feeling a bit more enlightened about European art, but not about work. I began to sense what you might call an unnatural vacuum – which nothing seems anxious to fill – in the visual imagery I am used to and therefore, perhaps, in the way I have come to see work.

Why do pictures matter? Visual images are incredibly powerful. The great Colombian writer Gabriel Garcia Marquez, for example, refuses to sell the film rights to his best-known book, *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, because a film would simply wipe out the images his readers have made for themselves of the strange tales he tells. It would be nice to think that all of us create our own images of work in the same way, but work is definitely not fiction.

Through TV and films, visual images have long since supplanted the written and spoken word as the common currency of social communication, the 'culture' we absorb to form so many of our attitudes, feelings and beliefs. Without social communication, without images of the work we do reflected in what we see, how are we to understand its significance?

Perhaps work is a fixed requirement that's best not thought about too hard because there's nothing much we can do about it anyway. But it is, after all, what we spend the better part of our waking hours doing, whether inside or outside the home, paid or unpaid. Our well-being and that of everyone we care for ultimately depends upon it. We invest in it our fondest hopes and our worst fears – not least our fear of being without it.

Unemployment and underemployment stalk the world today with increasing self-confidence. The tedium of so much of the work that has to be done may seem like a minor irritation in comparison with the wrecked lives and misery left behind by poverty. Unemployment polices the insane tyranny of work that drives people to toil

harder and do more of it – thereby helping to create yet more unemployment.

Work influences our lives in less obvious ways, too. A couple of years ago I edited an issue of the *NI* on mental illness. I came rather belatedly to see that the casual cruelties, ruthless calculations and studied indifference to feelings that work often demands of us help to drive us crazy. Quite as much, in fact, as the more personal, sexual or familial histories we're used to thinking of as the natural home of human emotions.

At work the deepest human emotions get translated into the language of productivity. We rely on industrial psychology, management training or Japanese working practices to see us through; to reconcile us, more often than not, with what we are

required to believe is the benevolent and majestic operation of market forces.

But I have just about as much chance of reconciling myself with market forces as I had of reconciling the books of the bank in Montevideo. I find it bleak and strange, this separation between work and visual images. I think it is perverse and sad that the most powerful means of communication we have should avert its gaze so firmly from such a significant part of our lives.

One reason why it does so is not hard to find. Josef Herman, whose drawings appear elsewhere in this magazine (pages 14, 24 and 25) made work the central theme of his art. In so doing he committed a form of commercial suicide. Before you decide to create an image you have to ask yourself who will buy it. There are not many customers for pictures about work – so not many pictures about it are ever produced. Ask yourself why not and you begin a critique of the society you live in. There's nothing particularly new or shocking about images being dominated by the 'market' for them. The problem preoccupied the apprentices of Renaissance Italy or the hacks of 'Socialist Realism' just as much as it does the art students of today.

Another reason comes closer to home. Desks, chairs, computer screens and operators in rectangular, air-conditioned, artificially-lighted office 'environments' are hardly the stuff of striking visual images. The great office picture has, so far as I

know, still to be taken. I've spent more of my time working in offices than I care to admit. It's not that the work I do now is tedious. Far from it. But I don't know, for example, what the space is I'm looking into while I work at the computer writing this. Hours pass by in some other dimension. Where do they go to? Inside an office the 'real world' is forever 'out there'.

Sometimes, however, it decides to invade.

One day a squad of armed soldiers marched into that bank in Montevideo. A colonel occupied the manager's office. We were 'militarized', made members *ex officio* of the Uruguayan armed forces, liable to arrest and punishment as deserters if we didn't work. The bank clerks had gone out on strike, driven out by intransigent employers and wages halved by inflation. They were hauled back to their desks by soldiers, then frog-marched off to military barracks for 'retraining'.

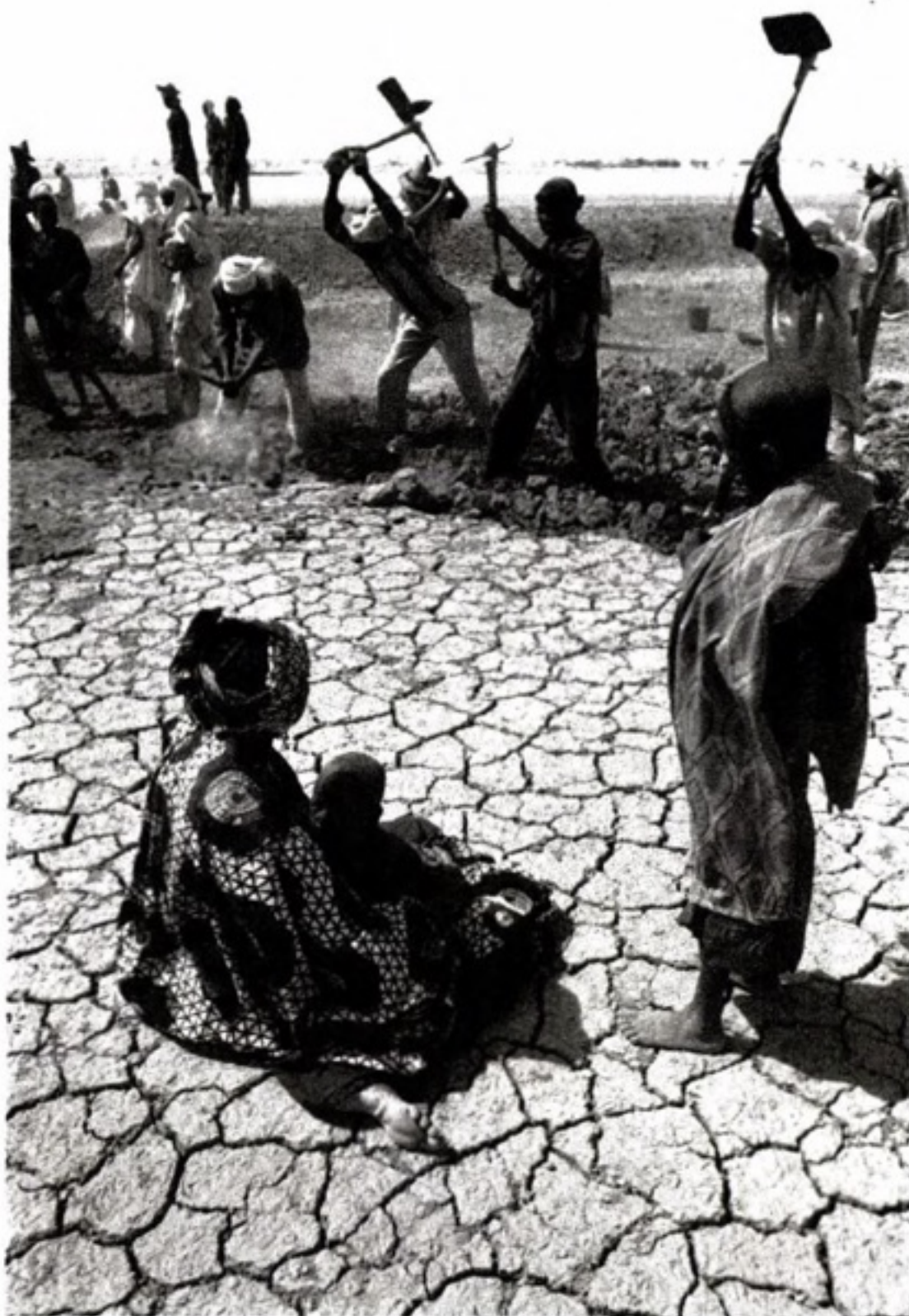
My memory is still rich with images of these events, and I'm tempted to think this is only because normal work had stopped altogether. On reflection I realize that the boredom I felt in the bank related to the fact that I was creating absolutely nothing. I have what feels like an instinct to *make* things, to create something that was not there before. It could be growing plants or vegetables, making meals or babies, writing articles, knocking together two pieces of wood – whatever it is, some tangible product of my daily existence is important to me, an essential source of satisfaction.

Most people I know seem to feel something similar. At various times and in different jobs we may get more or less of this kind of satisfaction. But without it we are belittled. What we have come to call a 'consumer' society, defined by what it consumes rather than what it creates, produces deep veins of dissatisfaction.

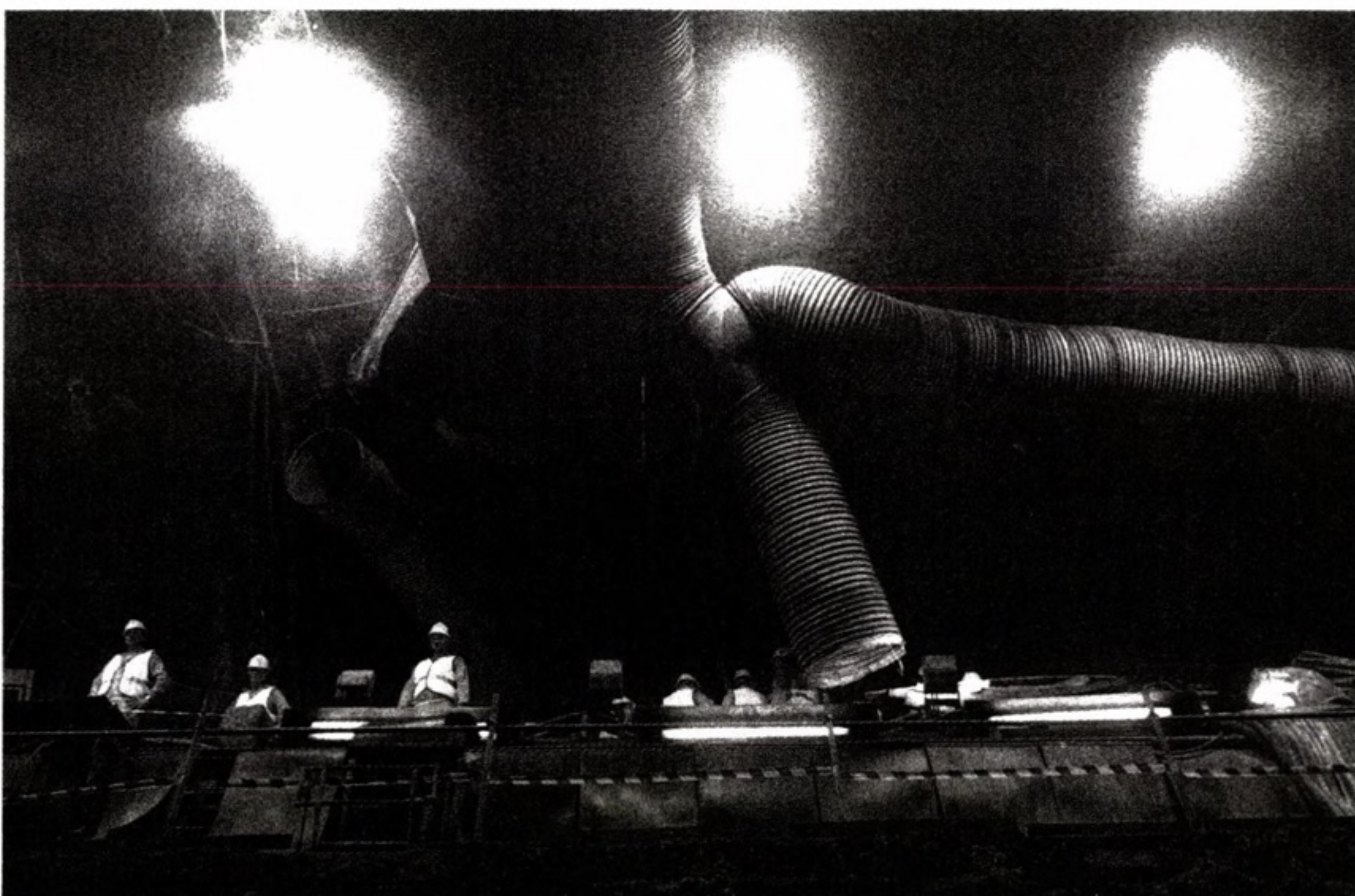
This is, I think, the essential link between all forms of work, manual or otherwise. Sebastião Salgado, whose stunning photographs have inspired much of this magazine, believes that by looking at manual labour he is documenting a vanishing world. He is doing so with an art – black-and-white still photography – that could be vanishing too.

All of this may well be true. Some of it – an end to the punishing routines of manual labour – may even be desirable. But none of it diminishes the impact of Salgado's images, the pleasure as well as the pain of creative work, the importance of the pictures themselves as a record of what it means to remain human in a changing world.

See them for yourself. Allow them to say to you what they will. They are that rare thing – great images of work that stay with you and make understanding more possible. ■



Left: Digging into drought in the Horn of Africa. **Below:** Burrowing monsters in the Channel Tunnel.





A plague of heroes

The gold rush to Serra Pelada in the early 1980s created biblical scenes in a gigantic pit gouged out by hand – and brought to the surface the violent conflicts in Brazilian Amazônia.

ONE day in 1980 a cowhand found a gold nugget in a stream. He took it for sale in a nearby town. Within two weeks 10,000 *garimpeiros* – prospectors – had descended upon the place that became known as Serra Pelada, ‘Bald Mountain’. Within a year there were 50,000 of them digging a gigantic hole without machines of any kind.

Just a few years previously the land had been covered by the tropical rainforest of the eastern Amazon. But the forest had been breached by roads and a railway to the huge Carajás mining project. Cattle ranchers had moved in behind them, burning and clearing the forest to form ranches the size of small countries.

You cannot say there is dignity in the labour of these men. They appear like beasts of burden, insects even, set in a fearful Gothic tableau of degradation. An apprehension of violence and betrayal lingers in their glances.

But there is also an almost miraculous capacity for order in the midst of chaos. Many of them came from the same villages and

families in the impoverished North-East, where a feudal system of land ownership made them destitute. Intricate agreements regulated the way tiny individual claims could be worked and how the gold was smuggled thousands of miles across Brazil into Uruguay to the south.

Then the gold of Serra Pelada ran out. By the end of the decade the mine was abandoned. More gold was found, much deeper into the Amazon rainforest, on the territory of the Yanomami Indians. The invasion of their lands and the spread of diseases against which the Yanomami had no resistance became a focus of international concern, with the *garimpeiros* playing the villains.

To the defenders of the environment and the indigenous peoples the *garimpeiros* are a plague. To those who want to see the Amazon ‘tamed’ they are pioneer heroes. To the mining companies they are shock troops, clearing the gold fields of inconveniences such as Indians. To themselves they are just workers, hoping to strike it lucky and make it back to the land they have lost. ■

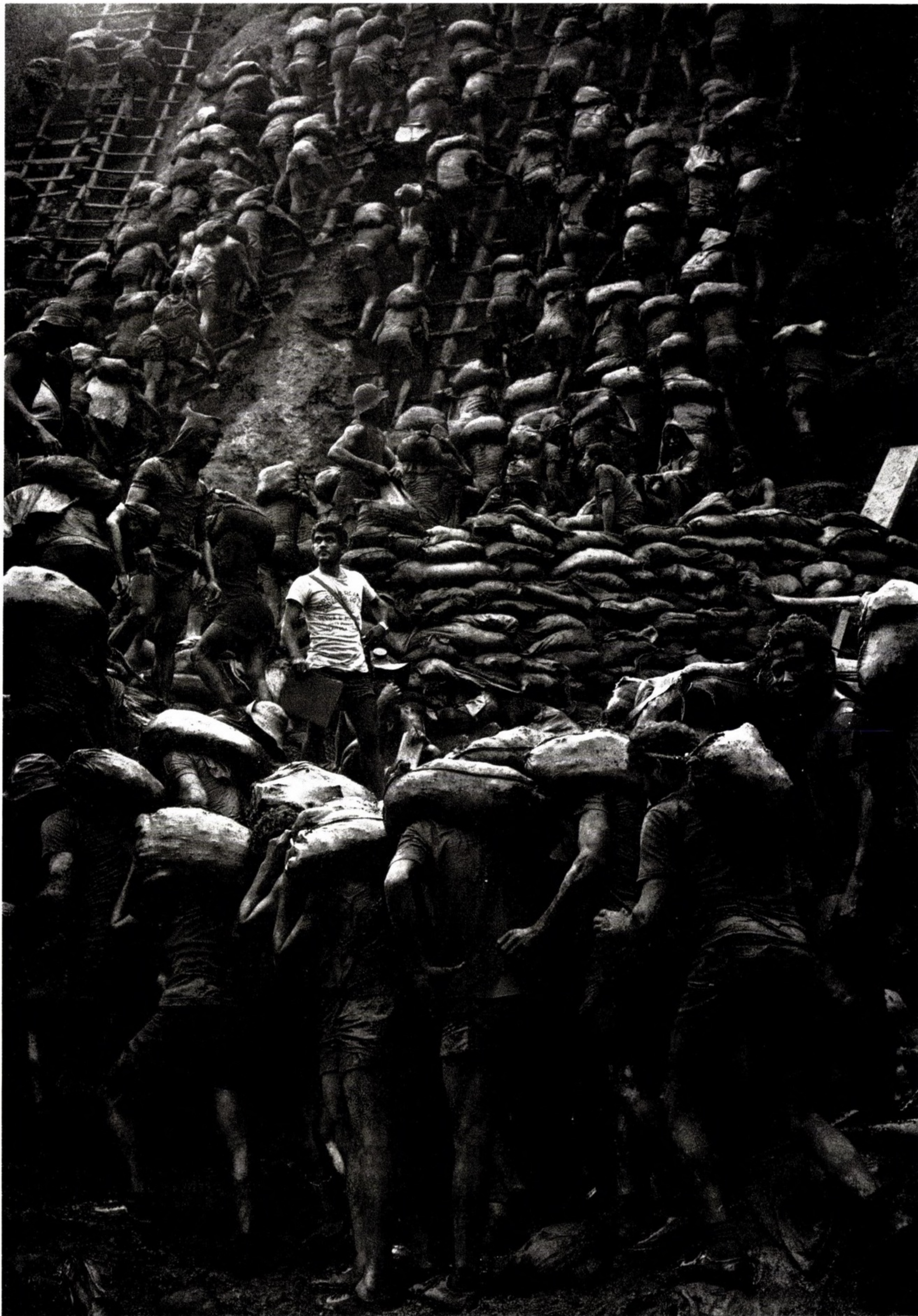


Above: Living in hope. Carriers use makeshift pools to sift for gold in sacks of soil.



Right: The white-shirted supervisor of a plot where gold was found; a haulage line forms to carry carefully labelled sacks to the surface.

Left: Diggers are called 'mudhogs' or 'tapirs'; minerals in the soil leave a silvery film over their bodies that makes them look like sculptures modelled in clay.



Ways of seeing ways of working

What you see depends upon how you look at it – RE Pahl considers the options.

LOOK at an image of a woman ironing. Is this work or is it leisure? And if it is work, what kind of work is it? She could be a full-time wage worker making garments as a domestic outworker. If she is hired on a piecework basis she could be trying to iron as many garments as quickly as she can. Or she may have been hired on a fixed contract and it doesn't make much difference how fast she works.

She may be working part-time, or on shifts which include a period at home, or casual work covering for regular employees at holiday time, or taking on extra work at a particularly busy period.

In all these cases she is selling her ironing skills to an employer. If she had an accident and lost her sight or injured her ironing arm her ability to work would disappear or be reduced.

We cannot be sure her employer is honest. She might not figure in the firm's records, so the employer can avoid paying taxes or granting rights to sickness benefit and maternity leave.

She might still be preparing the garment for sale but own the material and the iron; she may have dyed the cloth, designed the style or decorated the garment. She might have her own stall or boutique or she might be selling by contract to a retail store. In this case she is self-employed, responsible for her own pace of work and the quality of what she produces.

So far we know nothing about her age, marital status, race or attitudes. Let's assume she's ironing the garment for another member of the household where she lives. She may be ironing a shirt for her lover, as an act of love, knowing that her lover does the same for her. But it is not play, done purely for the pleasure of

doing it, like playing tennis or going fishing.

Alternatively, the woman may have been married for years to a man she barely tolerates. He insists on a clean, well-ironed shirt every day. He may hit her if she fails in what he claims is her duty. The task is

a burden and brings no pleasure; she is constrained, oppressed and resentful, brooding on the injustice of her situation.

Perhaps it is for the office next day and she's working to 'reproduce' herself as a smart worker. The way she presents herself makes a difference to her effectiveness as a worker. So she's working for her employer in her own time. Of course she's also 'reproducing' herself as a worker when she's cleaning her teeth or eating her breakfast, but she'd do these things even if she were out of work – and wouldn't be ironing her blouse if she were on holiday.

Perhaps it's her mother-in-law's blouse. Social pressures have made her care for someone who is unable to care for themselves. She's an unpaid community worker and the obligation prevents her from engaging in paid employment. Such burdens of family and kin are highly gender-specific. Men would not be expected to care for the elderly in the same way. In the case of an unemployed single man with a dependent relative the social services would, in Britain, provide support that would not be available to a woman in the same position.

She may be a member of the local dramatic society and the producer has flattered her into pressing the costumes of the leading players. Or she may simply have been picked on by a male producer as the nearest woman to be cajoled or flattered into doing a tedious chore and suffered the effects of patriarchal oppression as a result.

She just might find ironing a pleasing relaxation from a mentally exhausting job. The activity is then a pleasure and would not, therefore, be classed as work.

We've been thinking about a woman doing the task. Even if I'd referred throughout to 'a person', and the image had not been gender-specific, many readers would still assume that it was a woman doing the task. The tyrannies of custom and convention may create work as much as the economic relations of production. ■

RE Pahl is Professor of Sociology at the University of Kent, UK, and the editor of *On Work*, (Basil Blackwell 1988), from which this is an edited extract.



ILLUSTRATION: CLIVE OFFLEY



Constructing destruction

Women at work on the great concrete cliffs of the Sardar Sarovar dam in India are building a giant that will swallow up the Narmada River Valley.

A CONSTRUCTION site. Landscapes of concrete, cranes, cables. Heavy lifting, earth moving, hard labour by fragile forms in flowing robes, thin-limbed and upright, treading gently over the rubble. At first sight this is a place of paradox.

But there's no strangeness in women labouring in India. The world's hard labour is done mostly by women: in the fields, breaking the soil, tending the crops, carrying the harvest, the water and firewood.

Here too in the Narmada Valley: a modern wonder, harnessing the power of nature for the benefit of people, for progress. The massive Sardar Sarovar dam in Gujarat, India has been planned since 1947. The foundation stone was laid by Prime Minister Nehru in 1961. Thousands of villages and 131 urban centres will have their drinking water and electricity needs met. Noble work for noble people. Huge loans from the World Bank to pay for it. A collective effort.

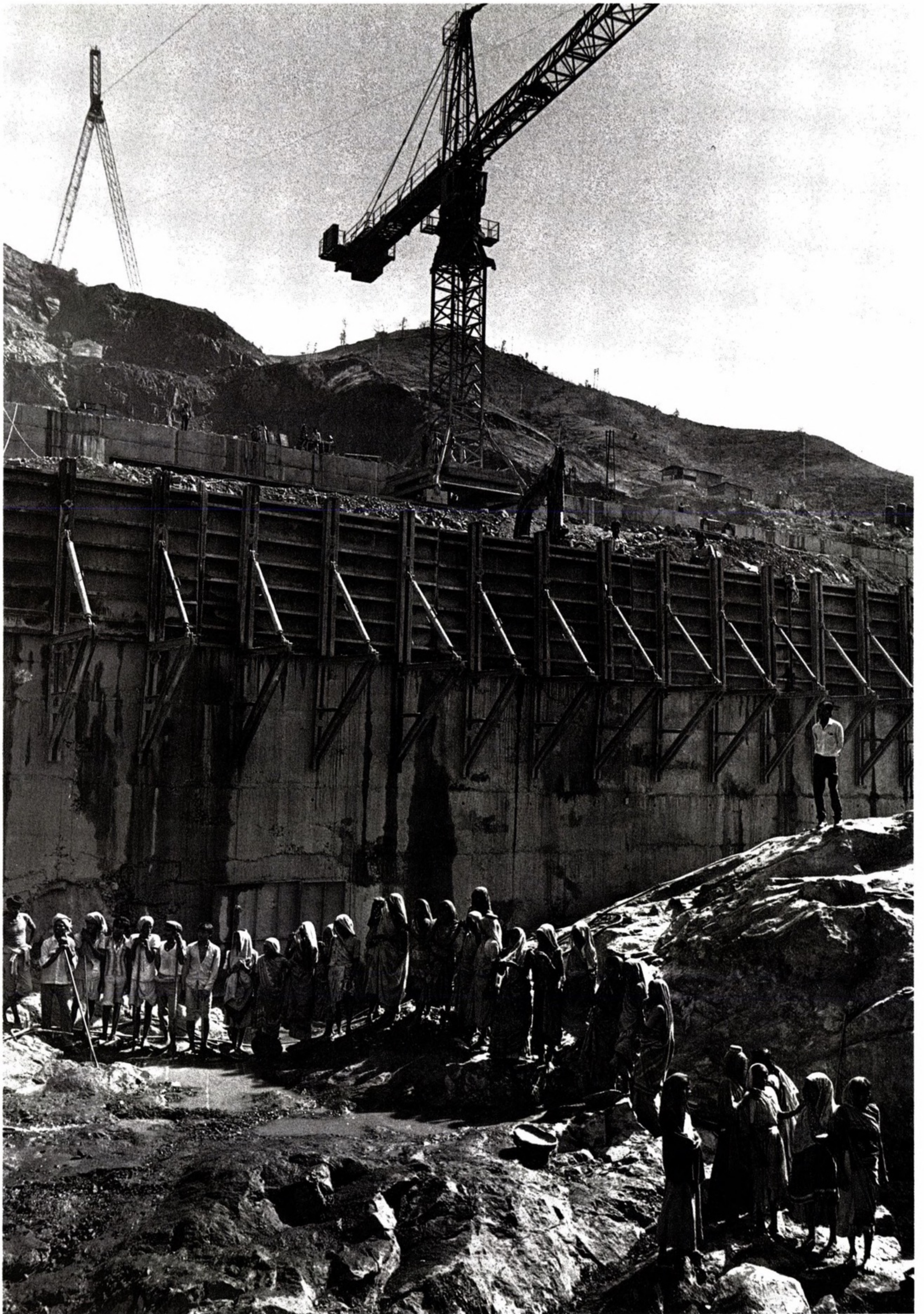
But... 'For the last seven years a fight has been going on,' says Medha Patkar, one of the leaders of *Narmada Bachao Andolan* – an opposition campaign which in 1991 won the 'Alternative Nobel

Prize', the Right Livelihood Award. 'It is now quite clear that the Narmada Valley is being led towards destruction – not just of its environment but also of its human communities.'

Thousands of local people, many of them tribal people living in traditional ways, are to be displaced. They were not consulted. And no-one can point to a place, anywhere in the world, where those who have been displaced by dams, who 'stand in the way of development', have been happily resettled.

'Development means meeting demand,' argues Medha Patkar. 'And demand comes from those who have the purchasing power and the political power to express it... The whole atmosphere is dominated by the Western-orientated development pattern and the interests of élites – bureaucrats, politicians, contractors and their like.'

For their pains, Medha Patkar and her friends have been detained and harassed. Standing in the way of development is a hazardous business. But the doubts grow stronger. The World Bank, under fire for its environmental record, wavers. What do these labouring women think about it? Has anyone thought to ask? ■





Left: Workers line up to clock in and be given their instructions for the day.

Below: One among many: 7,000 local people are employed for eight months of the year and earn \$2.50 a day.

Above: Men do the specialized work, women are employed largely to carry stones and mud.



Maid and madams

'How can our children dream of things they never see us do?' asks Sindiwe Magona. African women suffer in unexpected ways from the malady at the heart of work in South Africa.

ILLUSTRATION: JOSEF HERMAN RA



I WANT to be a millionaire when I grow up!' pipes the innocent voice of a child at the beginning of an anti-drugs commercial. In my mind the voice paints a picture of a confident white child, a child who would dare to have a dream like this so young.

An African child – certainly not in South Africa – would hardly dare to say such a thing. Most African children in this country have no such dreams. We can only dream of what we know, what is within our world. Dreams, like hallucinations, are culture-bound. And for millions of South Africa's children words like engineer, dentist, doctor, lawyer, judge, train driver, pilot, sea captain, banker, president, prime minister, university chancellor, mining magnate – or magnate of any kind, for that matter – and a host of others are just not the stuff that dreams are made of.

African adults, the children's role models, are the sweaty faces, the calloused

hands, the chipped fingernails that spend long hours doing menial and tedious jobs in dangerous conditions for pay in peanuts. I am not saying this is work no-one should do. But there is a basic wrong – a sinfulness even – in conditioning an entire nation to slavish work, so its children never see adults who look like they're doing anything that commands respect, let alone inspiration. How can our children dream of things they never see us do – ever?

And that's just the bad news. Worse are the 'hope-against-hope' clusters of people: men huddling in groups all along the roads outside African townships, standing there from early morn until way after sunset, standing there in the vain hope that someone somewhere will need an extra pair of hands. Day in, day out these men stand there, each keeping his own appointment with disappointment.

On a good day a man makes little more than the price of enough food to eat. Such a

day might begin at seven or eight in the morning and not end before nine at night, with no breaks: a day of hard work, lifting bag after bag of cement, mixing it, carrying it to a building site. One man in a group I talked to told me he wished he could get himself arrested and gaoled for a while: 'At least then I would eat some food, however bad,' he said.

These are the men our boys see. Almost all the women our girls know are domestic servants. Outside their own homes, the vast majority of African women work in other women's homes: cooking, cleaning, nanny-ing children, doing the washing, ironing, taking children to school, fetching children from school, going to the shop, the dry cleaners, the butcher, the dairy, the shoemaker, the tailor, the bank and the florist. And these women count themselves lucky. Unemployment in South Africa is high – and women are often the sole breadwinners.

Few would envy the lot of the domestic



servant. It is a world of exploitation, unrelieved monotony, full of drudgery, with scant security. Despite all the talk of change, on a recent visit back home I found little evidence of it. For a significant number their status has actually declined – the very things heralded as signs of improvement have left them in a weakened position.

When one talks of maids and madams in South Africa one immediately imagines a black maid and a white madam. Well, that's a stereotype that is fast crumbling. Hold on! I'm not suggesting that white women have sunk so low as to work in the homes of black women! Wouldn't that be a switch?

But as some African women ascend into the professions and juggle busy schedules they are beginning to employ domestic servants. I am sorry to say that, on the whole, maids are faring worse under black madams than white ones. There are plenty of good reasons for this. The black madam,

herself discriminated against and undervalued at her workplace, usually does not command a salary on a par with that most-favoured worker in South Africa, the white man. The high rate of divorce means that in more cases than not the black madam is a single parent. Misdirected traditional practices mean the employer often adopts a paternalistic stance.

Sometimes there is payment in kind instead of hard cash. The madam buys, say, groceries in bulk for the maid's family in the village, or clothes and books for the maid's children and – sometimes – helps with medical expenses. These may be benefits, but they do not excuse the basic injustice of taking the maid's services and underpaying her for them in kind that is not of her own choosing.

Sad to say, too, low wages are not the only evil domestic servants suffer under black madams. They can work ridiculously long hours without even the afternoon rest that is customary in white homes. Cook, nanny, kindergarten teacher, laundry woman and cleaner, the maid also serves as confidante or psychologist if madam's love-life goes awry. And the busier madam's social life the more responsibilities come the maid's way, with no financial compensation.

For a long time I saw very little evidence of the black middle class everyone was talking about. The yawning gap between the lifestyles of maid and madam tells me that we must have arrived: that, unfortunately, we African women – who have known all manner of oppression and exploitation, from others and from our very own – we also know how to demean, dehumanize and denigrate. And if the white woman is not careful she'll find that we can do this much, much better than she has ever done, if we have not surpassed her already.

Rough stuff? How many maids would tolerate a white madam who addressed her as 'you fool' as a matter of course? Or work for the same family for 30 years without a wage rise, with no fixed holiday and no fixed pay day?

As in other arenas of South African life there is growing evidence of the effects of the march of time. A few white madams are exploring different ways of dealing with the women in their employ. Some are encouraging the maid to take up education or training classes; taking out unemployment insurance; improving their houses under a new scheme now in place in black residential areas. The houses may not be palaces, but the improvements spell a tremendous difference in the quality of life of the maid and her family.

Yes, all these measures are paternalistic practices. But I don't know that the maid who benefits from them is complaining.

People die waiting for the ideal of a fair wage for fair work. Most people welcome relief whatever coat it comes wearing. In such circumstances a maid may actually be doing much better than many professionals. But there's no chance of this getting out of hand – of the whole race of white madams losing its collective head.

Faces that are not white are beginning to appear, as they should have done long ago, reading the news on TV in English or Afrikaans with accents that are not white. What a relief! Even so we are still talking about the proverbial drop in the ocean. We're not flying aeroplanes yet, nor driving trains and buses for that matter.

But in the Transkei I met several African women driving kombis – the preferred vehicle for public transport and taxis – and many of these women owned the taxis themselves. All along South Africa's national highways there are the most gorgeous floral displays. Tending them are women in the bright orange garb of work gangs. They beautify the country's roads and make driving more pleasurable.

In education African women dominate numerically, but there are embarrassingly few in the higher echelons. The first women school inspectors, principals of high schools and counsellors are beginning to emerge. A tiny number overall, but a first tottering step... and about time too.

We are to be seen in hotels and restaurants going through the doors as customers, people to be served as well as servants. Our arrival causes confusion: it throws everybody out of gear; the eyes of black staff pop in sheer disbelief. We have learnt the lessons of our masters only too well. Both sides – black client and black labour – are extremely uncomfortable, even a little embarrassed by these new roles. However, once the situation has righted itself, after the initial awkwardness, we all remember our lines.

'Table for four, please,' we say, trying not to look insulted by being ignored, by not being seen as the new South Africa's Africans – unfettered, upward-bound, sophisticated, reaping the rewards that come from being educated and therefore having a position.

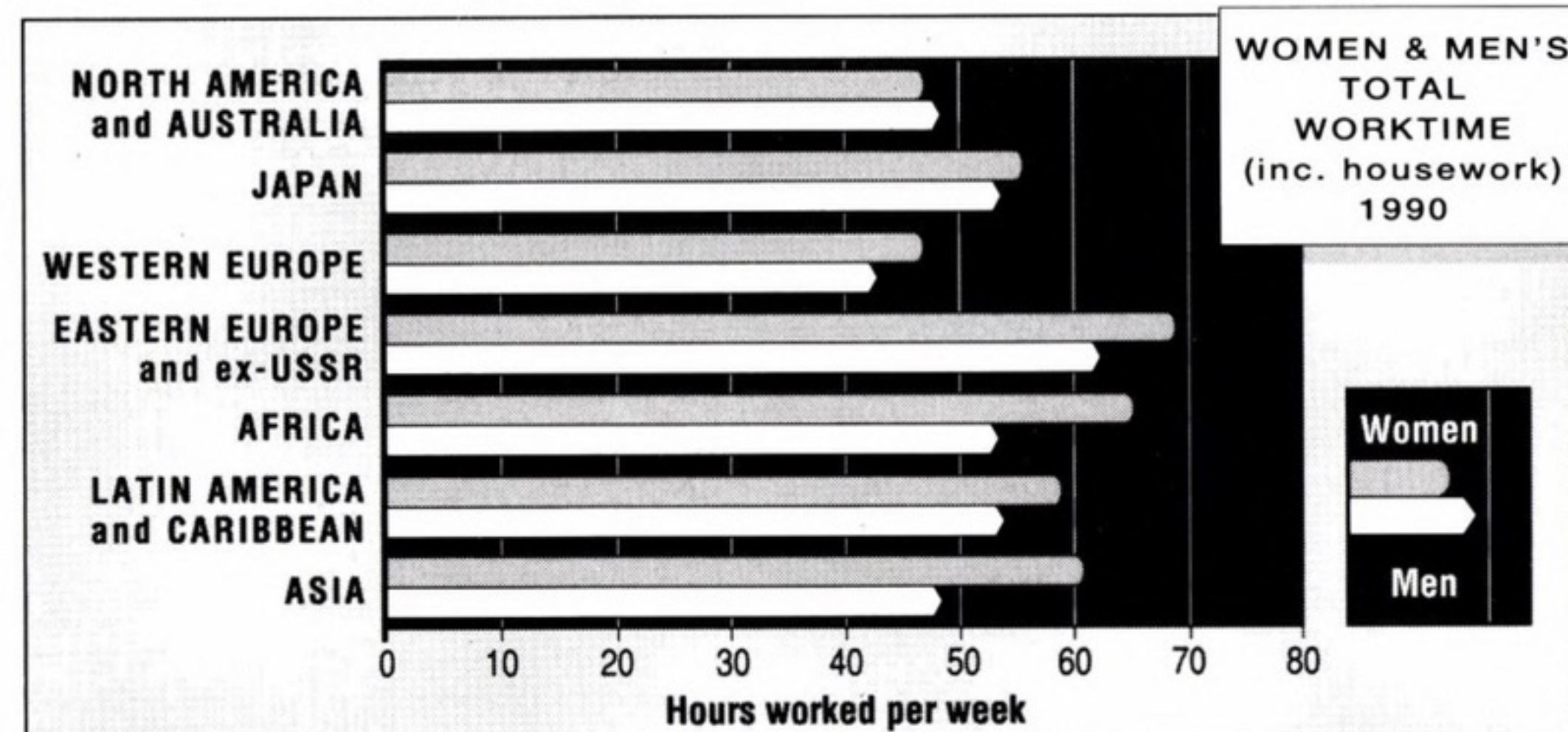
But until such time as all adults in South Africa can remedy the malady at its heart Africans will remain handicapped and exploited – and workers of the future will be stunted, too, by the sight of so much hopelessness among the adults of their world. ■

Sindiwe Magona is a South African writer and broadcaster who currently lives in New York.

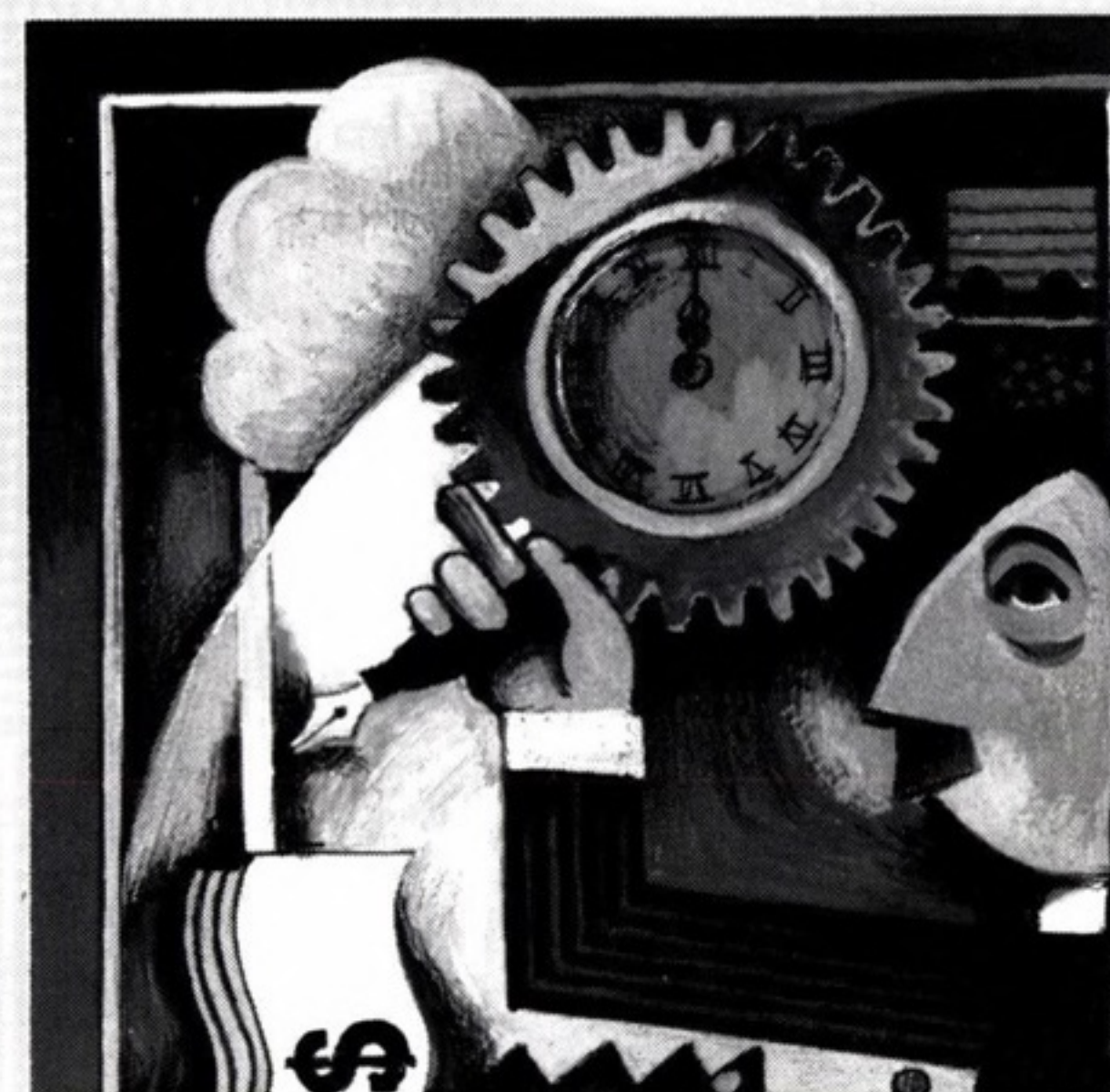
Her two latest books – the second part of her autobiography, *Forced to Grow*, and a collection of short stories *Living, Loving and Lying Awake at Night* – were both published by the Women's Press, London, in October 1992.

FEMALE¹

When housework is taken into account, women work longer hours than men everywhere – except in North America and Australia.

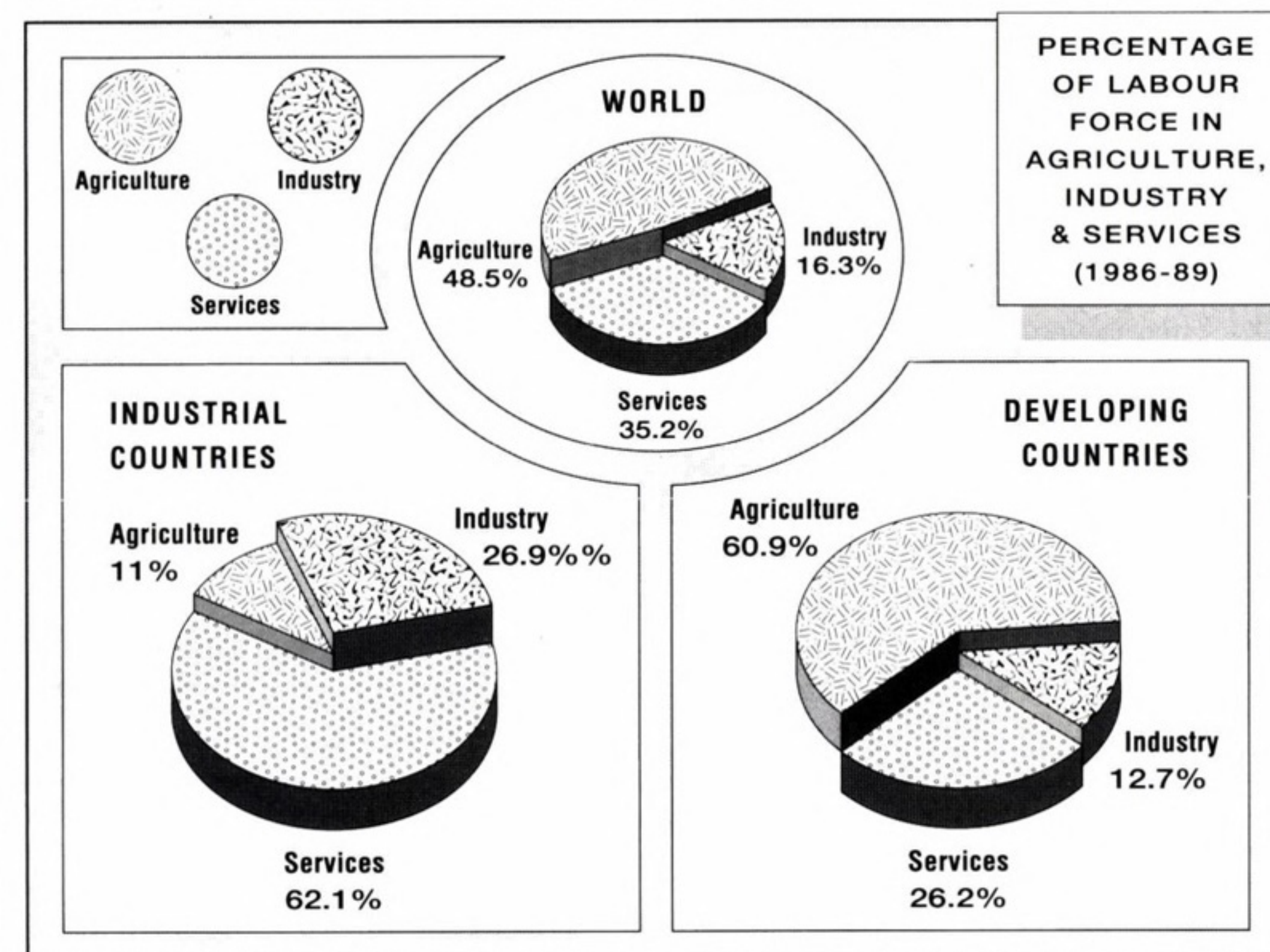
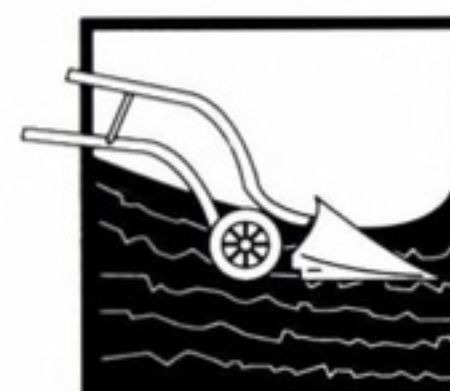


THE UNIVERSAL MODERN WORKER



RURAL²

Nearly half the work in the world is done to produce and prepare food, in agriculture. Most people in 'industrial' countries don't work in industry but in offices and services like health, education and transport.



YOUNG³

Millions of the world's children provide cheap labour – and can't answer back:

- As much as 11 per cent of the labour force in parts of Asia is made up of child labourers.
- Brazil has seven million working children aged under 16 out of a total child population of 55 million.
- Millions of European children work on farms and in factories.
- Several million children in South Asia are enslaved in bonded labour.



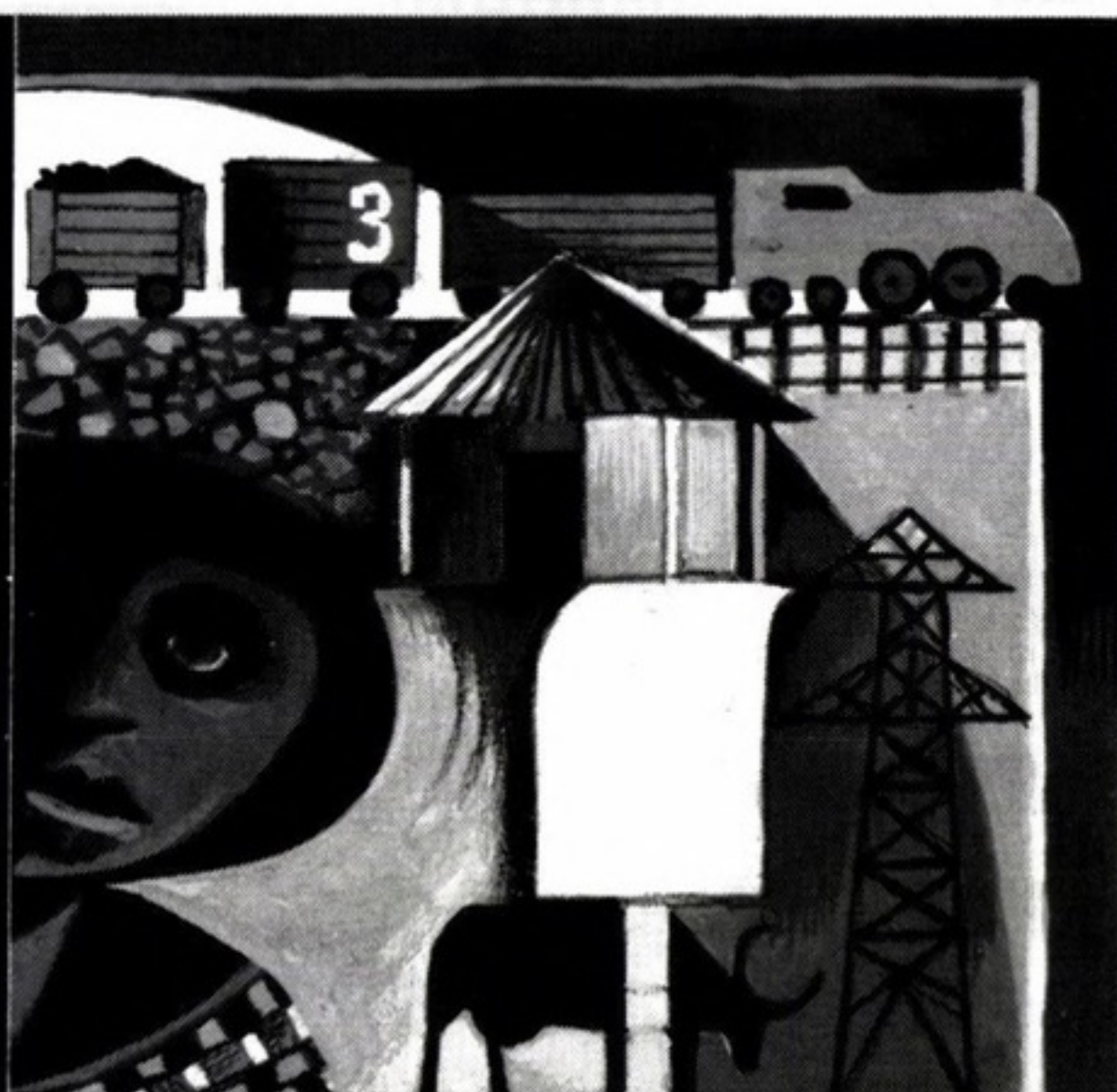
POOR²

The richest 20 per cent of the world's population receive 82.7 per cent of total annual income.



The remaining 80 per cent would have to work 20 years – and the poorest 20 per cent 140 years – to earn the same amount. And the gap is getting wider as the rich get richer and the poor poorer.

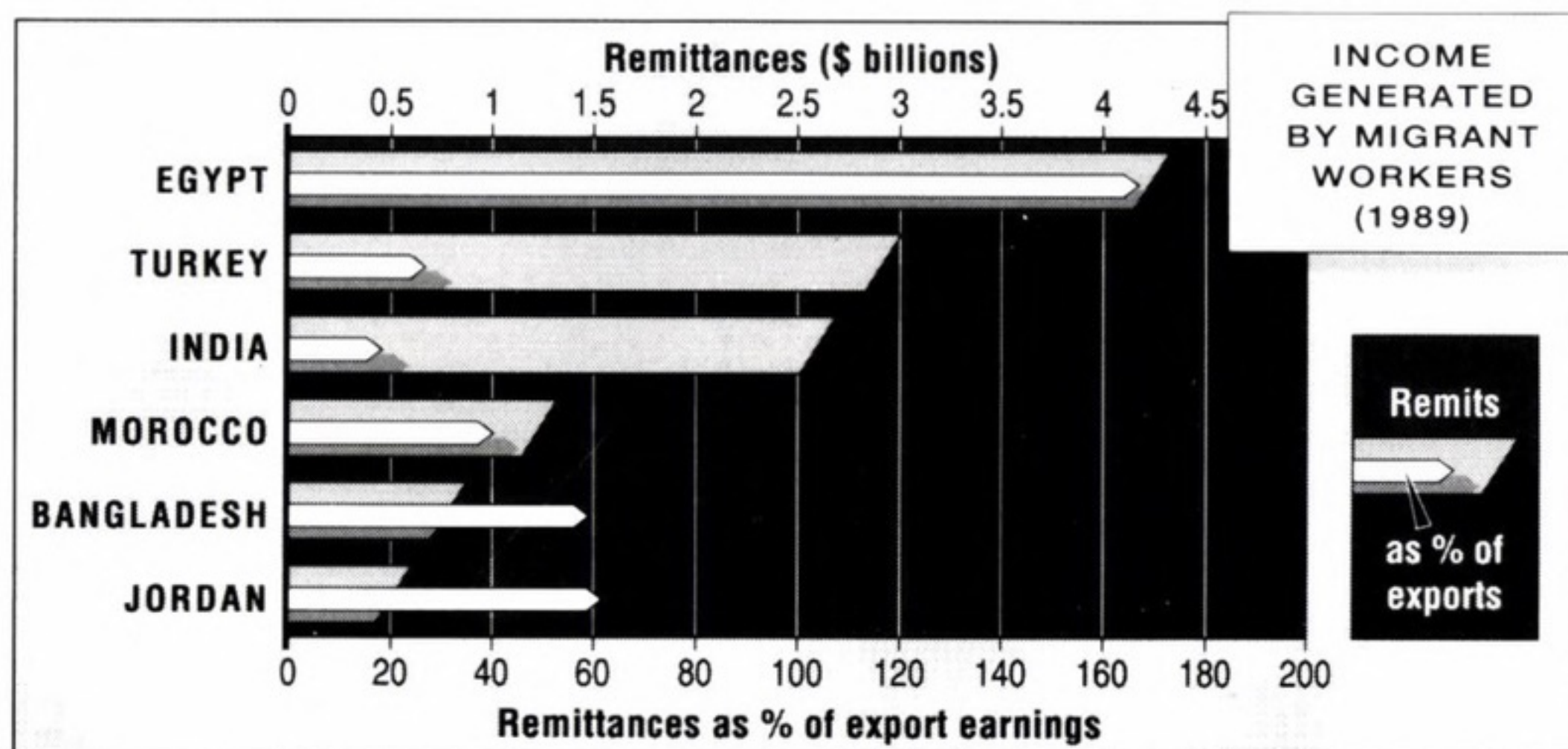
Say 'worker' and what picture springs to mind? Men like miners in dungarees and hard hats? Production lines and construction sites? Chances are the people who do most of the world's work don't look much like what you imagine.



MOBILE³

The money migrant workers send home is becoming increasingly important to many poorer countries.

For the most part they do the '3Ds': 'dirty, dangerous or difficult' jobs that local workers don't want to touch. But skilled labour is also draining from poor countries to richer ones: skilled workers as a proportion of all migrants to the US increased from 44.7 per cent in 1966 to 75.1 per cent in 1986.



INSECURE³

To live in a city you need to have a job, but millions can't find one and millions more who've got one live in fear of losing it:



- The overall unemployment rate in industrial countries was estimated at 7.1 per cent of the workforce in 1992 and is rising.
- In Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union it could reach 15 or 20 per cent.
- Half or more of all new employment in France, Germany, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Spain in the 1980s was for workers on part-time or short-term contracts.
- Urban unemployment in sub-Saharan Africa stands at 18 per cent and could rise to 31 per cent by the end of the decade.
- In Africa, unemployment rates are often higher for those with education than for those without.

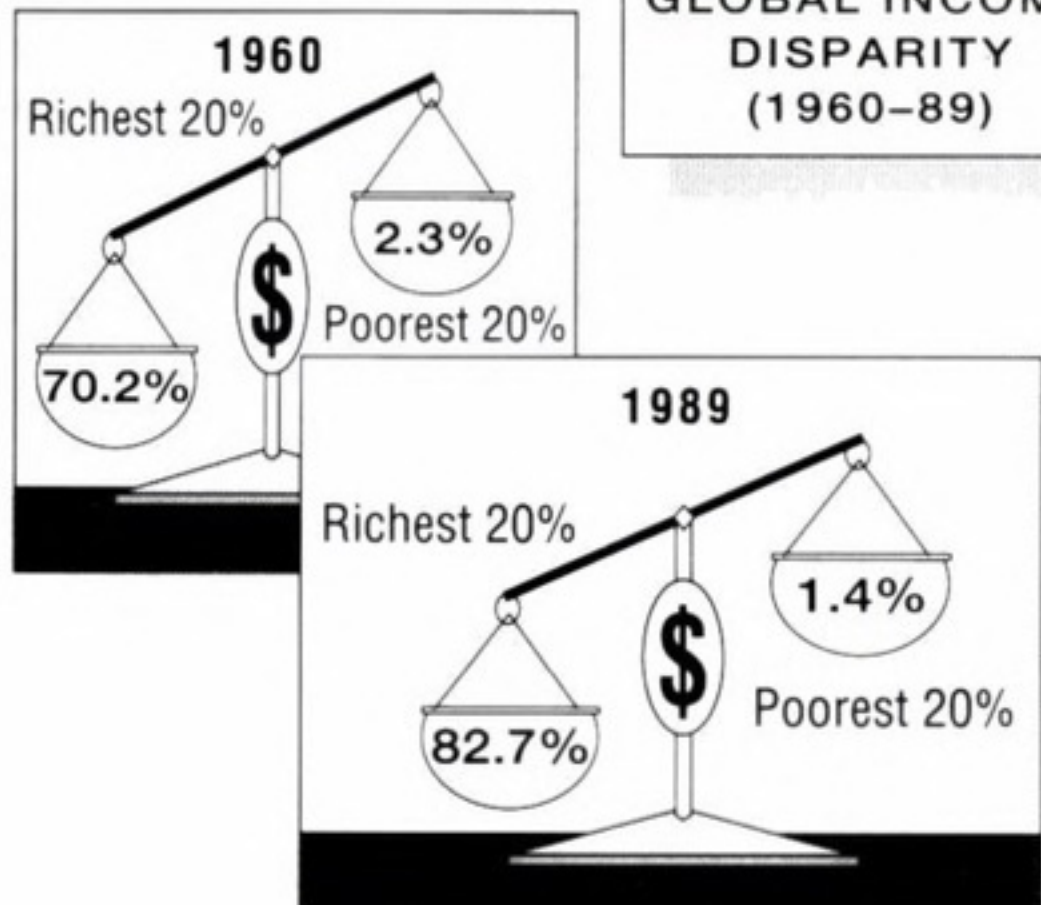
ISOLATED³

The workers of the world are becoming less united. Trade union membership has fallen in most industrial countries. Elsewhere people fear recrimination if they join. But in a few Asian countries trade union membership has been rising sharply.



- Trade-union membership in industrial countries dropped from 37 per cent of the workforce in 1975 to 28 per cent in 1988.
- Between 1987 and 1989 trade-union membership increased in the Philippines by 38 per cent, in Bangladesh by 27 per cent and in Thailand by 13 per cent.
- Since 1986 over 300 trade unionists have been killed in Colombia as a result of the influence of drug cartels.
- After the June 1989 coup in Sudan trade unions were dissolved and their leaders imprisoned.

GLOBAL INCOME DISPARITY (1960-89)



¹ *The World's Women 1970 to 1990*, United Nations. ² *Human Development Report 1992*, United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). ³ *World Labour Report 1992*, International Labour Office, Geneva.



Inside the volcano

The sulphur-breakers of the Kawak Idjen volcano, on the eastern tip of the island of Java, Indonesia, work in an inferno at the extreme of physical endurance. And it's all for making sugar.

THEY wake in the village of Licin at one in the morning. Then they begin the 12-kilometre ascent to the summit of the volcano. Their path takes them through plantations and tropical rainforest to a small hamlet of huts where a group of about 10 miners stays for two weeks while they work in the volcano.

After seven hours of climbing to the summit there is a perilous descent into the crater itself: a lunar landscape, split into ravines and cracks like the face of an old white demon, at its centre a limpid lake of blue and yellowish water, a gigantic bath of boiling sulphur.

A team of eight workers, gripping wedges of cloth from their sarongs between their teeth to filter the poisonous fumes, chisels at the blocks of natural volcanic sulphur with crowbars. They fill wicker baskets with a 70-kilo load and carry it up to the lip of the volcano. When it finally reaches Licin, each load is worth about \$3.50. It is used to refine white sugar from cane.

Once known as 'brimstone' and regarded by alchemists in antiquity as the main agent of combustion, sulphur is used widely today in many industrial processes – in the manufacture of tyres, fungicides and paper and as a mild antiseptic in medicine. Its pungent smell is characteristic of industrial pollution around the world.

But it is critical to life, too. Sulphur is regularly lost from the land in river run-off to the sea. For years, scientists have speculated about how it returns to the land – the 'sulphur cycle'. James Lovelock, the author of the 'Gaia Principle' – the Earth as an organic whole – used his background as a chemist to examine the puzzle more closely. He argued that algae in the sea emit sulphur through the gas dimethyl sulphide and assist cloud formation. This is how sulphur is transferred from the ocean to the land. In his view, this process is part of the wider self-regulatory mechanism of the Earth. ■



Right: Climbing through the fumes to the deposits formed from overnight evaporation. **Below:** Breaking off chunks of sulphur with crowbars.



Right: Blinded and choking from the fumes, a worker on the edge of the crater grips cloth between his teeth to filter the air.





Above: One false step might prove fatal on the 600-metre climb out of the crater with 70-kilo loads in wicker baskets carefully balanced to spread the load.



Left: Exhausted after climbing out of the volcano, a carrier rests before continuing the descent to the village of Licin, where the sulphur is used in sugar refining.

My pictures look like my life

Sebastião Salgado talks to David Ransom about how he works and what goes into creating his photographs.

'MY pictures look like the light I saw when I was a child in my village in Brazil, like all my friends and relations, the people I trust, like the ideology I developed and the political change I want to see in my country. In the end I believe that my pictures must look like this, like my life, just as your magazine must look a little bit like you in a certain way.

Work is like the seam of my jeans, that links together the fabric of all humanity. For six years I worked on a project, a kind of fragmentation of this universe. I went to some 40 or 50 different sectors of production, not just manufacturing industries but mines, oil fields, agriculture. I observed a lot, I learned a lot and I came out of it a changed man, no longer the person I was when I began.

In 1987 I took pictures of steel workers in the Ukraine and France when they were separated by a huge ideological gulf as well as by national borders. But I think that in the end these separations don't really exist. If you go somewhere and close your eyes for a minute and imagine that they are not there, all you see before you is a family of workers, and families within families all around the world.

I worked with sugar-cane workers in Brazil, for example. They resemble closely the sugar-cane workers of Cuba: the way they lie down on the ground to rest, the way they smile, their kindness and their aggression, they are really so similar. The tobacco workers in Cuba, who were no more than 50 kilometres away from the sugar-cane workers, were completely different.

You know, it's very strange this, the

way people come to resemble what they produce. I once discussed this with Eduardo Galeano (the Uruguayan writer, *see next page*), who is a very close friend of mine. He said: "Sebastião, it's incredible, you know. When I lived in Barcelona, many years ago, we always went to buy chickens from a particular farm. A woman looked after the chickens and each time we went there she looked more and more like a chicken, and after many years she even began to speak like a chicken."

Steel workers are very powerful-looking people. They know they are at the centre of industrial society, what they produce turns up in construction, in shipyards, car factories, everywhere. Nobody taught them at school that what they do is very important, but they know it is. The way they dress, with their special hoods and protective clothing, they become like priests in front of the furnace, this huge cathedral of fire.

I am part of a family that does this kind of documentary photography. You must spend time, a lot of time, doing it. You must live with the people you photograph. For me it is a great pleasure to enter into these relationships. Of course I am not a worker in the sense that I am doing the work that they are. I am a photographer. What I want to be is in some small way a part of their environment, to learn about what is happening in front of my eyes, receiving from them and learning, not judging.

That's very important. You bring things with you, knowing about light, composition, the jobs they do, many things that have given you the reason to be there. But really you have come to learn, because you know the theory, not the practice – you don't know anything. You must learn to see the complete person before you. You



Above: Seeing what is essential in Sudan.

must be there to receive. And when you do, the relationship you have with that person is very interesting and very, very powerful. Things go as they *must* go.

You know, everyone likes to be photographed. You have to discover what is hidden from view: what it is that work gives to people, what they want from their work, what they want it to show, that it's a really important thing in their lives. At the moment when the photographer understands this, any contradictions in what you are doing disappear.

Spending 15 months in Africa doing a story about starvation was such an important thing for me. There was this huge drama going on. I had to act as a vector to the outside world. You might imagine that people living in the heart of Sudan, very close to nature, don't know about cameras. But they do know, even if they've never seen a photograph. They understand it's important. I believe that people always understand about what is essential, *really* essential.

My wish in doing this series of pictures about work is to pay a kind of homage to a working class that is disappearing, in whose name I was militant in my country for many years, thinking it would achieve power. But it has gone. These are new times needing new ideas. A homage is a romantic view in a kind of way. But it's not romantic work. It's hard, hard work. I come out of the experience feeling very proud to be part of a human species that can create such wonderful things. ■



ILLUSTRATIONS: JOSEF HERMAN RA

The wages of work

Work makes us do strange things.

Eduardo Galeano casts a quizzical eye over the results.

WHEN do people earn the Per Capita Income? More than one poor starving soul would like to know.

In our countries, numbers live better than people. How many people prosper in times of prosperity? How many people find their lives developed by development?

The Cuban Revolution triumphed during the year of greatest affluence in the history of that island.

In Central America, the more wretched

and desperate the people, the more statistics smiled and laughed. During the Fifties, Sixties and Seventies, stormy decades, turbulent times, Central America boasted the highest economic growth rates in the world and the most extensive regional development in the history of human civilization.

In Colombia, rivers of blood merge with rivers of gold. Glories of the economy, years of cheap money: in the midst of euphoria, the country produces cocaine, coffee and crime in insane quantities.

Alienation

Back in my salad days, I was a bank clerk.

Among the customers, I recall a shirt manufacturer. The manager of the bank would renew his loans purely out of pity. The poor shirtmaker was constantly on the brink of bankruptcy. His shirts were not bad, but no-one bought them.

One night, the shirtmaker was visited by an angel. When he woke that morning he had seen the light. He sprang out of bed.

The first thing he did was to change the

name of his enterprise to Uruguay Sociedad Anónima ('Uruguay Company Limited'), a patriotic name whose initials are: USA. The second thing he did was to sew labels onto the collars of his shirts that said, with complete honesty: *Made in USA*. The third thing he did was to sell shirts like hotcakes. And the fourth was to pay off his debts and make tons of money.

Advertisements

For sale:

One halfbreed negress of the Cabinda race, for the sum of 430 pesos. Knows rudiments of sewing and ironing.

Leeches, recently arrived from Europe: prime quality. Four, five, and six vintenes apiece.

Carriage. Will sell for five hundred patacones, or exchange for one negress.

One negress, thirteen or fourteen years old, free of vices; of the Bangala race.

Small mulatto, eleven years old, knows rudiments of tailoring.

Essence of sarsaparilla, two pesos per bottle.

One nursing female. To be sold without offspring, has good and plentiful milk.

A lion, tame as a dog, will eat anything; a bureau and chest, both of mahogany.

Maid, free of vices and disease, of the Conga race, approximately eighteen years of age; also, a piano and other pieces of furniture, all at reasonable prices.

From Uruguayan newspapers of 1840, 27 years after the abolition of slavery.

The system

If you're not quick, you're dead. You are obliged to be the screwdriver or the screwed, the liar or the target of lies. These are times of what do I care, what can you do about it, don't interfere, look out for number one. A time of swindlers: production yields nothing, creation is pointless, work has no value.

In the River Plate basin, we call the heart a *bobo*, a fool. And not because it falls in love: we call it a fool because it works.

Hunger

A system of isolation: *Look out for number one*. Your neighbour is neither your brother nor your lover. Your neighbour is a competitor, an enemy, an obstacle to clear or an object to use. The system feeds neither the body nor the heart: many are condemned to starve for lack of bread and many more for lack of embraces.

Celebration of friendship

A friend told me how, on an avenue in Paris, a woman beat off an entire battalion of municipal workers with her umbrella. The workers were catching pigeons when she sallied forth from an incredible Model T, one of those museum pieces with a



Born in Warsaw in 1911 **Josef Herman** came to the UK in 1940. In 1944 he set up a studio in the small mining village of Ystradgynlais in South Wales and began a remarkable series of drawings and paintings of miners.

Courtesy Boundary Gallery, 98 Boundary Road, London NW8.

crank starter, and brandishing her umbrella, launched her attack.

Wielding her sword with both hands, she pressed forward, her righteous umbrella smashing the nets they were using to snare pigeons. Then, as the pigeons fled in a tumult of white, the woman turned her umbrella on the workers.

The workers shielded themselves with their arms as best they could, stammering protests which she ignored: 'Show some respect, ma'am, if you please, we're trying to work, we're just following orders, ma'am, why don't you go take a whack at the mayor, calm down, ma'am, what's eating you, this lady has gone mad...'

When the furious woman's arm grew tired and she leaned against a wall to catch her breath, the workers demanded an explanation.

After a long silence, she said:

'My son died.'

The workers told her they were very sorry, but that they were not to blame. They also said that they had a lot to do that morning, you understand...

'My son died,' she said again.

And the workers: yes, yes, but they had to earn a living, that there were millions of pigeons flying loose throughout Paris, that those bloody pigeons were the plague of the city -

'Cretins!' the woman exploded.

And to the confusion of the workers, she said:

'My son died and became a pigeon.'

The workers fell silent, and stood in thought for quite a while. Finally, pointing to the pigeons that populated the skies, the tile roofs, and the sidewalks, they proposed to her:

'Ma'am: Why don't you take your son and let us work in peace?'

She adjusted her black hat:

'Oh no! Absolutely not!'

She looked through the workers as if they were made of glass, and said with great serenity:

'I don't know which of the pigeons is my son. And even if I did know, I wouldn't take him away. For what right have I to separate him from his friends?'

Grapes and wine

On his deathbed, a man of the vineyards spoke into Marcela's ear. Before dying, he revealed his secret:

'The grape,' he whispered, *'is made of wine.'*

Marcela Pérez-Silva told me this, and I thought: If the grape is made of wine, then perhaps we are the words that tell who we are.

Forgetting

Chicago is full of factories. There are even factories right in the center of the city, around the world's tallest building. Chicago is full of factories. Chicago is full of workers.

Arriving in the Haymarket district, I ask my friends to show me the place where the workers whom the whole world salutes every May 1st were hanged in 1886.

'It must be around here,' they tell me. But nobody knows where.

No statue has been erected in memory of the martyrs of Chicago in the city of Chicago. Not a statue, not a monolith, not a bronze plaque. Nothing.

May 1st is the only truly universal day of all humanity, the only day when all histories and all geographies, all languages and all religions and cultures of the world coincide. But in the United States, May 1st is a day like any other. On that day, people work normally and no one, or almost no one, remembers that the rights of the working class did not spring whole from the ear of a goat, or from the hand of God or the boss.

After my fruitless exploration of the Haymarket, my friends take me to the largest bookstore in the city. And there, poking around, just by accident, I discover an old poster that seems to be waiting for me, stuck among many movie and rock posters. The poster displays an African proverb: *Until lions have their own historians, histories of the hunt will glorify the hunter.* ■

Eduardo Galeano is a journalist and historian who lives in Montevideo. His many publications include *The Open Veins of Latin America* and the three-volume history of Latin America, *Memory of Fire*. **Cedric Belfrage**, who translated this piece, wrote *The American Inquisition* on the McCarthy era in the US.

From *The Book of Embraces*. Copyright © 1989 by Eduardo Galeano; Copyright © 1991 by Cedric Belfrage. Published by WW Norton & Company, Inc, New York, 1991. Originally published in Spanish as *El Libro de los Abrazos* by Siglo Veintiuno. Reprinted by permission of Susan Bergholz Literary Services, New York.



Flying pigeons forever

Bikes are best – in China they are a way of life, at the hub of a wheel that reaches round the Third World.

Pedal, chain, wheels and frame – the basic design of the bicycle is as near perfect as a machine can be. And bikes are good for you, too. For every person who takes a trip by bike rather than by car there is less pollution, less fuel used, less space taken on the road and one healthier person.

The world's 800 million bicycles outnumber cars by two to one and almost half of them are in China. In the US there are fewer bicycles than cars: in China there are 250 times as many.

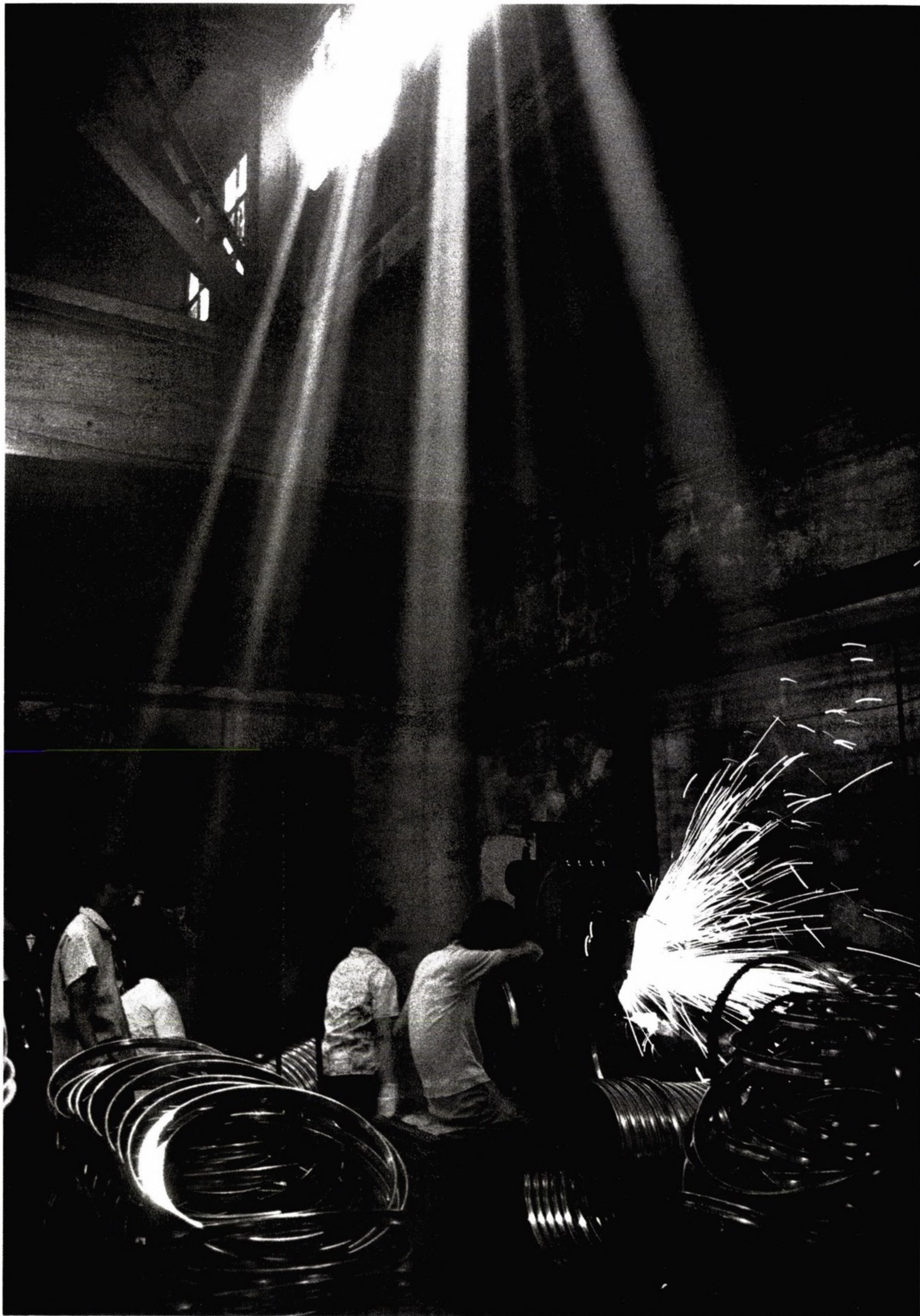
Between them, the 'Flying Pigeon' factory in Tianjin and the 'Forever' factory in Shanghai produce almost seven million bicycles every year. The parts are sent out in kit form to be assembled by hundreds of local distributors. So employment in the bicycle industry is spread widely across the country.

The 'Flying Pigeon' factory exports to 32 countries, particularly to the Third World where sturdy, durable design and low-cost components are essential. China makes all the bicycles sold in

Bangladesh, where they are an important working tool and the basic means of transport for millions of people – 40 per cent of daily trips in Dacca are made by bicycle.

People who earn their living by pedalling for public transport suffer severely from exhaustion and damage to their bone structures; they seem to be just one step away from beasts of burden. The factory work, though relatively clean and healthy, is still repetitive and unrewarding. Nonetheless, people who work with bicycles seem to share a sense of common endeavour.

Industrial countries have as many bikes per head as in Asia, but tend to use them less. The good citizens of Groningen in the Netherlands, however, make half their daily trips by bike – more even than in Beijing, China. Tianjin, home of the 'Flying Pigeon', tops the world league, with three-quarters of daily trips made by bike. That may not make the people of Tianjin the happiest and healthiest in the world – but it should help. ■





Left: Handlebars and brakes in their millions get the treatment.

Previous page: Wheels in the making at the Flying Pigeon factory which produces kits sent out for assembly across China.



Left: User-friendly machines are quick to fix in Dacca where all the bikes come from China. **Above:** The beauty of the bike in the Bangladeshi countryside.

ARMS TRADE

Qualms becalmed

Recession prompts sales drive

THE curtain is down on the Cold War drama. But there is a growing fear that weapons of mass destruction are changing hands more freely than ever.

It is focused on the former Soviet Union, which has dissolved into a handful of highly-militarized states desperately searching for hard currency to prop up their gutted economies. While the volume of trade in arms has fallen sharply since the late 1980s, the current recession also means that some producers are more than willing to sell to anyone ready to buy, regardless of the consequences.

Rumours persist that Iran has procured two atomic warheads from the former Soviet Republic of Kazakhstan, along with missile delivery systems from North Korea, and that Iraq may still be importing nuclear devices despite a UN arms embargo. These are, it must be stressed, only rumours.

But the basic process of producing crude nuclear weapons is now within the grasp of

a growing club of countries. While China, France and South Africa have all agreed to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty within the past year, India, Pakistan and North Korea have not.

Russia promises to stand by the former Soviet Union's treaties and agreements, but for Ukraine and Kazakhstan the future is not that clear. In July, for example, the Ukrainian leadership reneged on a promise to surrender control of all its nuclear weapons to the Russian-led Commonwealth of Independent States. Today, this issue remains unresolved, as does the whereabouts of the former Soviet Union's huge stock of chemical and biological weapons. Russian dealers are also said to have supplied arms covertly to Serbian forces and sent illegal shipments of machine guns to Britain, possibly for the IRA.

In the Middle East, Iran has embarked on a massive arms build-up since the end of the Gulf War, buying one billion dollars' worth of weaponry from Moscow and a further \$500 million from Kirgiziya. The Russian government appears to have few qualms about re-arming Iran, despite that region's record of instability. 'We have finished with the practice of political priorities in the arms trade,' Sergei Galziev, Russia's Deputy

Minister for Foreign Economic Relations, declared recently. 'Payment in hard currency is now the main principle for weapons sales.'

On the other hand, the NATO powers are competing fiercely to build up the armed might of other Middle Eastern 'friendly' states. Since Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, the United States alone has approved over \$20 billion in arms sales to the Middle East, a third of which have been agreed since George Bush called for a regional arms control initiative in May of 1991.

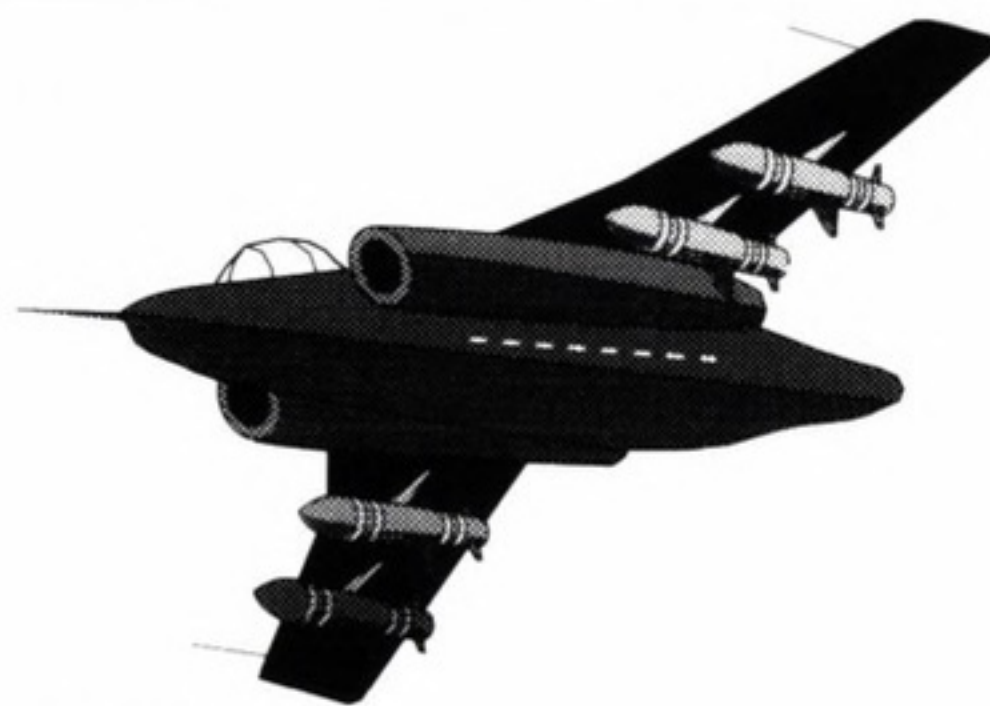
He has further cancelled export bans on a wide range of dual-use – civilian and military – high-technology products. The US economy remains mired in recession and the lifting of these bans could mean as much as \$3 billion in new business for US companies. Scrambling to grab scarce contracts, the US has been blocking the control proposals of some of its European allies.

Constant and indiscriminate arms trafficking is making sure that the world is becoming less and not more safe. Ironically enough, the top five exporters of conventional weapons are the five permanent members of the UN Security Council ■

Richard Evans

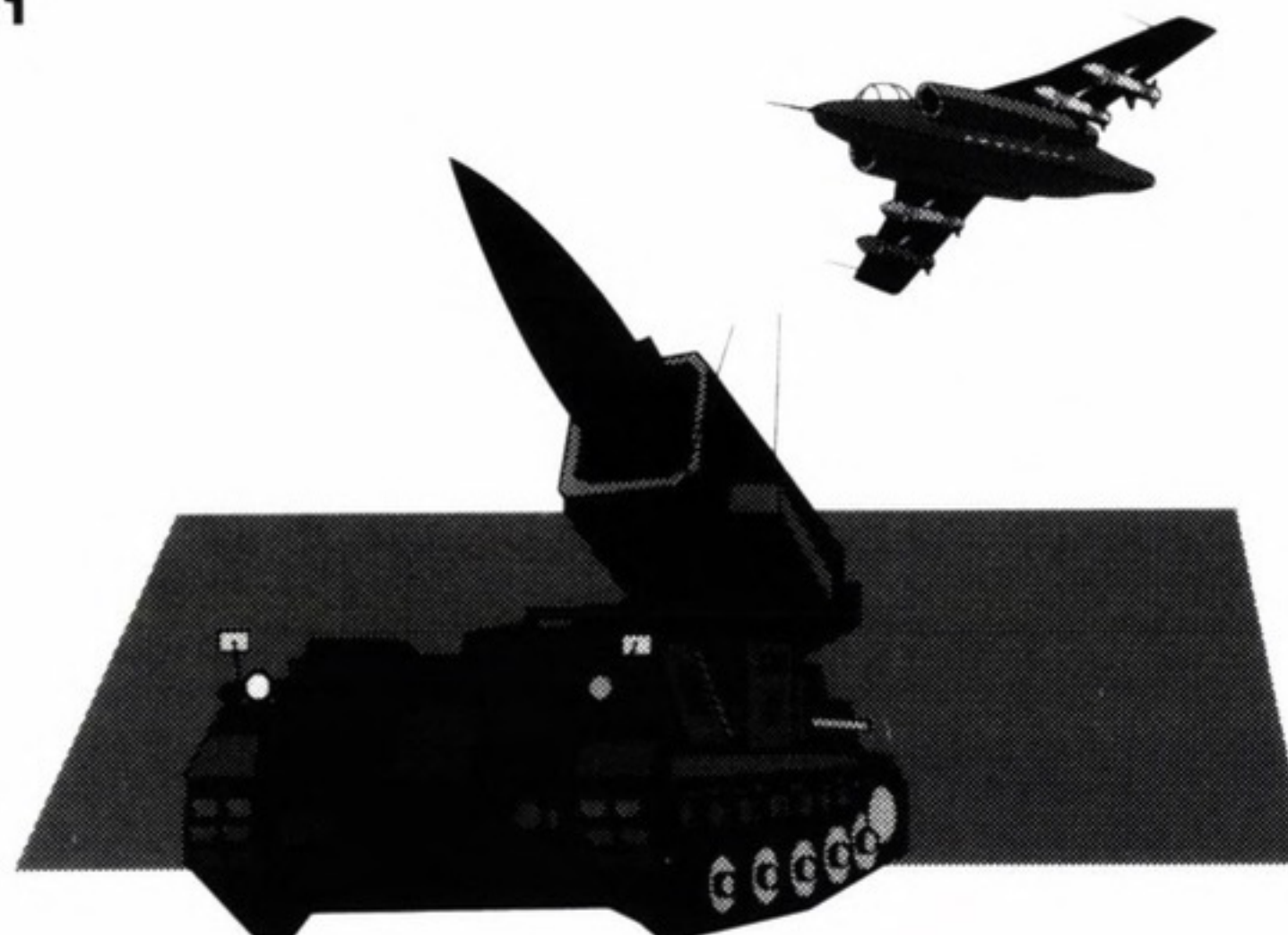
Top 10 exporters of major conventional weapons, 1987-91

	\$ millions
USSR	61,339
USA	59,957
France	11,220
UK	9,097
China	7,857
Germany, West	6,115
Czechoslovakia	3,264
Italy	1,878
Netherlands	1,758
Brazil	1,629



Top 10 importers of major conventional weapons, 1987-91

	\$ millions
India	17,561
Saudi Arabia	10,597
Iraq	10,319
Japan	9,750
Afghanistan	8,430
Turkey	6,384
Egypt	5,461
Spain	4,955
Czechoslovakia	4,644
Korea, North	4,631



Source: Stockholm International Peace Research Institute

PALESTINE / ISRAEL

Soul in the soil

Farmers face ruin

THE Palestinian farmer raised his hands and shrugged his shoulders when asked why he no longer looked after his almond trees. 'My land is all loss for me,' he explained.

Hassan ari Sawalha lives in Ben Na'im village, close to Hebron in the Israeli-occupied West Bank. He owns 20 *danums* of land (about two hectares) and grows almonds, grapes and olives. He has had to turn to teaching in the local elementary school as he can no longer make a living from farming.

Nearly 40,000 Palestinians are involved in some form of agriculture in the Occupied Territories. Water has always been a problem in the West Bank and recent years have seen worsening droughts. Since the 1967 occupation Israeli authorities have prevented the renovation of existing wells, restricted the quantity of water that can be extracted and prevented Palestinians from digging new wells.

Unlike their Israeli counterparts, Palestinian farmers cannot reclaim Value Added Tax on the agricultural materials they buy and in addition are restricted by curfews, travel bans and land confiscations. During the Gulf War, when the Occupied Territories were put under continuous curfew, an estimated 30 per cent of vegetable crops in the Jordan Valley were destroyed because farmers could not tend their land. Israeli farmers can market their goods to



Olives under arms – a Palestinian child's-eye view of harvesting under military control.

Palestinians, but not *vice versa*.

Amazingly, in a land which has olives and almonds in abundance, Israel imports olives from Spain and almonds from California – small local farmers find it impossible to compete in saturated markets. The Palestinian Agricultural Relief Committee, which is funded by UK charity Christian Aid, has helped Palestinian farmers to find export outlets. In a trial scheme, the Agricultural Services Centre recently exported 1.5 tonnes of almonds for distribution by 'alternative trading' organizations to avoid local agents. The UK-based Equal Exchange and Traidcraft are contracting for a minimum of 10 tonnes of

sweet almonds this year from five or six farmers in the Hebron area.

Planting almond and olive trees is vital to Palestinians in another way. If land is evidently under cultivation the risk of confiscation for Israeli settlement is reduced. Ben Na'im has had large areas taken away and the villagers are unlikely to get it back.

'It's as if they're taking the soul out of our bodies,' says Hassan ari Sawalha. 'My father was a child and played on this land. I played on this land. My son played on this land. Our land is just as dear to us as our children.'

Dee Sullivan / International Agricultural Development



Singapore slackers

Although the success of modern Singapore has been built on the backs of merchants and central planners, the best and brightest are directed towards a career in public service.

But the Government is now wondering if this is a healthy state of affairs. Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's founding father and senior minister, believes that Singapore now needs risk-taking entrepreneurs willing to take part in East Asia's economic boom. But, he sighs, life is so comfortable that Singaporeans 'are reluctant to go into environments which are the exact opposite of Singapore's'.

The Prime Minister, Goh Chok Tong, has hinted that 'comfortable' careers may be harder to come by. He indicated that fewer university places might be available in future to train lawyers and specialist doctors.

Creating an entrepreneurial spirit in Singapore is not going to be easy. Politicians will have to encourage character traits hitherto regarded as suspect: unorthodoxy; a willingness to risk failure; and heresy – a certain irreverence about the Government.

The Economist, Vol 325, No 7782

INDIGENOUS PEOPLES



Rigoberta Menchu: hopeful the prize 'will help the Indian people of America to live on for ever..'

I Rigoberta

Nobel prize brings media to attention

THE awarding of the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize to Guatemala's Rigoberta Menchu sets the seal on a new international concern for the indigenous population of Latin America.

The world's media and politicians had been steadily warmed up to the cause by controversy over 'celebrations' of Columbus' arrival in the Americas 500 years ago; by Amnesty International's condemnation of governments from Argentina to Canada for their treatment of the continent's indigenous peoples; and by the United Nations' declaration that 1993 will be the Year of Indigenous Peoples.

But it was the Nobel Prize committee's decision in favour of a 33-year-old Quiche Indian activist that brought the biggest outpouring of international concern for the continent's 40 million Indian peoples.

Few people outside Guatemala had heard of Rigoberta Menchu 12 years ago when personal tragedy and anger at the brutal repression of her nation's 60-per-cent Indian population prompted the former coffee-picker to begin a campaign of protest.

Now her life story – particularly the burning alive of her father in 1980 by police during a human-rights protest; the torture and murder of her mother later that same

year; and her 1983 book *I Rigoberta* documenting her personal experience of persecution – is becoming known around the globe. Her life's work has arguably become the most fashionable and worthy international cause of the 1990s.

Rigoberta and her supporters hope and believe change is coming in the continent whose original inhabitants live everywhere in the most extreme poverty, wield the least political influence and suffer the worst human-rights abuses.

The new wave of optimism was exemplified by Guatemala's National Congress president, Edmund Mulet, at a reception for Menchu in Guatemala City. 'From now on Guatemala is not going to be the same. This is an historic event that is going to change things in a most fundamental way,' said Mulet, an outspoken supporter of indigenous rights in a country where at least 100,000 people have died – many at the hands of right-wing death-squads – in 30 years of civil war.

And Menchu herself declared: 'I am very hopeful that it will help the Indian peoples of America to live on for ever'.

But such views are balanced by the more pessimistic outlook of most independent observers. 'After the fuss dies down it will all quickly be forgotten,' said Juan Manuel Lopez Garduño, an anthropologist in Mexico, where Menchu lives in self-imposed exile. 'What we are hearing and reading now is all just lip-service. There won't be any real consequences. The questions and the problems will remain. You can't reverse five centuries of injustice overnight, no matter how much media hype and political rhetoric there is.'

Andrew Cawthorne

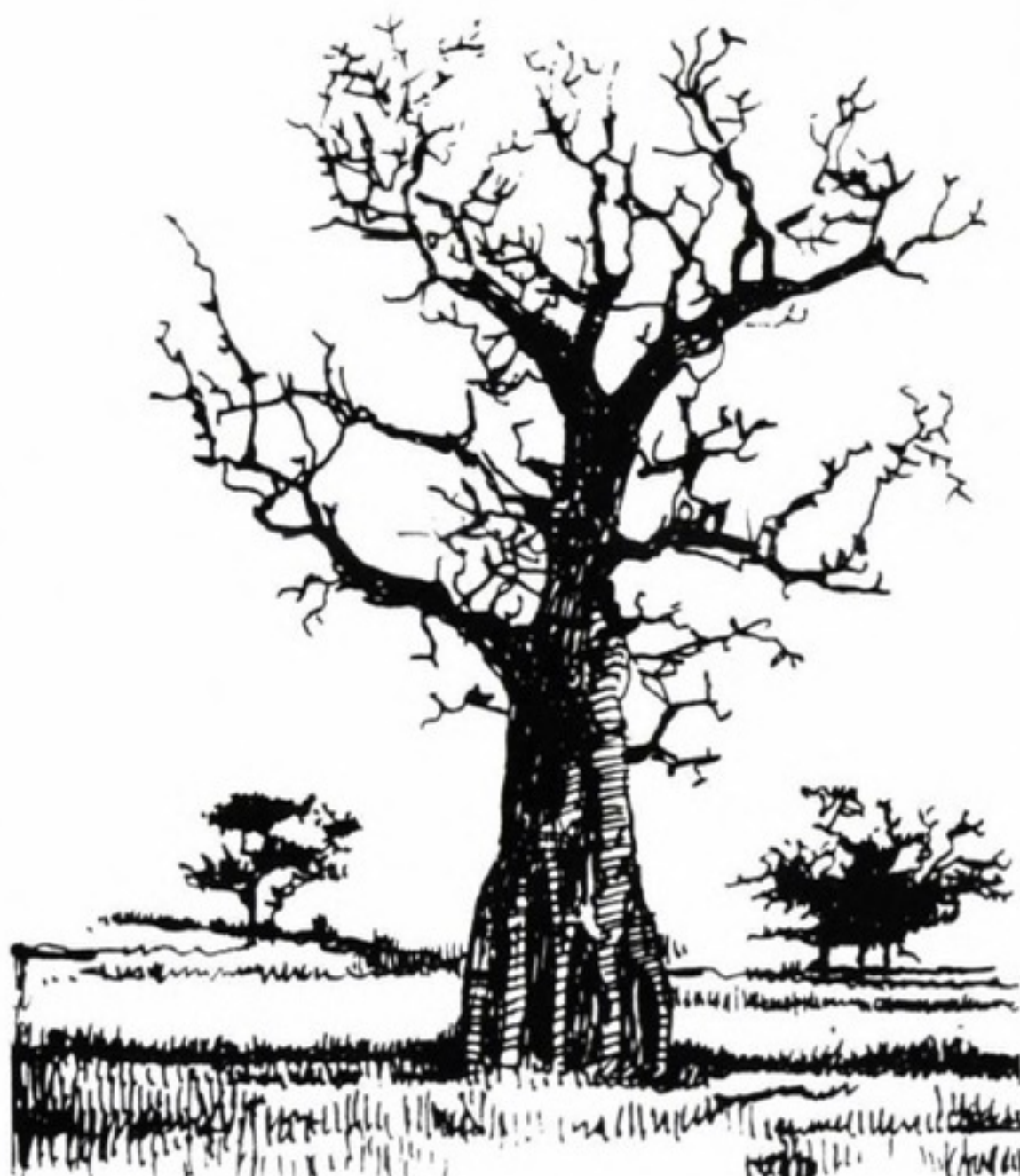
A going concern?

The cloud of concern over rainforest destruction has yet to form over another group – the dryland forests of the Sahel. They were not on the 'Earth Summit' agenda in Rio and will have to wait until 1994, when there will be an International Convention on Desertification.

The Sahel forests lack 'bio-diversity' (a wide range of species) and so are routinely ignored by environmental lobbyists. Yet accelerating land degradation and deforestation affect the lives of millions. The majority of Sahelians depend on the dwindling tropical dryland forests for all their domestic fuel, for building materials and food supplements, and for soil protection.

Saving these dryland forests is just as urgent as saving the rainforests – maybe more so as there is not yet a dryland forest campaign.

For more information contact
SOS Sahel, 1 Tolpuddle Street, London, N1 0XT



END

END Quote

'Black slaves are no longer brought to Brazil from Africa; the modern badge of slavery is not colour but poverty and unemployment.'

Father Ricardo Rezende, winner of the 1992 Anti-Slavery Award



Drug cop Didier Bezace tries a little tenderness in Tavernier's *L 627*.



L 627

directed by **Bertrand Tavernier**

The hard-realism cop drama is a staple genre in French cinema. In recent years there's been no shortage of downbeat depictions of Parisian policing methods, the most notable being Bob Swaim's glossy *La Balance* and Maurice Pialat's lugubrious *Police*.

Bertrand Tavernier's contribution to the genre is different, privileging the realism over the fiction and getting you involved in character rather than plot; the nearest equivalent in style is Ken Loach. As in Loach, glamour is mercilessly weeded out till you get something that's as close as fiction can get to the impression of reality.

L 627 is an article in France's Public Health Code under which drug addicts can be held for up to four days with daily medical checks. Lulu (Didier Bezace) is a hard-working cop placed on Drugs Squad duty who finds that his ideals aren't necessarily those of his colleagues. The film has stirred up much controversy in France, drawing accusations of racism for its portrayal of African and Arab drug dealers.

Tavernier is an unlikely director to merit a charge of anti-Arab feeling, his last film being the TV documentary *La Guerre Sans Nom*, which looked critically at France's colonial record in Algeria. Tavernier has argued that his film is simply true to life, quoting statistics that suggest that 80 per cent of Parisian dealers are in fact African or Arab. His case has been borne out in that respect by the campaigning organization SOS Racisme, who have been using it for educational purposes. And indeed most of the drug users busted by the squad

in the film are presented simply as victims of the poverty trap and of the social restrictions imposed by a vehemently racist society. *L 627* does not paint a pretty or particularly hopeful picture, but it makes its point compellingly.

Politics ★★★★★
Entertainment ★★★



music

Harvest Moon

by **Neil Young** (*Reprise*)

Neil Young continues to be the most erratic of North American heirs to the folk tradition. One moment he'll be exploring his R&B roots and taking a satirical swipe at corporate sponsorship (*This Note's For You*); the next he'll be rooted in a pure folk-protest vein (the excellent *Freedom*); then suddenly he'll be claiming kinship with the new generation of grunge rockers and bringing out an entire CD of guitar feedback culled from live performances.

If these show Young the radical, *Harvest Moon* is Young the conservative. Not politically conservative as he was a few years back, when he briefly and

Neil Young: Harvest 20 years on.



bizarrely declared himself a confirmed Reaganite; but personally conservative in that he's harking back to a less complicated past.

His early 1970s album *Harvest* was among his simplest (and most popular) works, and one of the few that espoused anything like hippie beatifism. *Harvest Moon* has been billed as its long-awaited sequel but the tone here is more one of hard-won realism. The opening *Unknown Legend* is a beautiful musical appendix to *Thelma and Louise*, a lament for one woman's wasted life; *Dreaming Man* regrets the impossibility of romantic love in a world of malls and Club Med vacations. The 10-minute *Natural Beauty* backs up its lament for the Amazon with some rainforest recordings, to slightly mawkish effect.

Most impressive of all is *War of Man*, a haunting hell-on-earth scenario with the refrain 'No-one wins' and with dramatically martial backing. *Harvest Moon* is not one of Young's great soapbox records, more a stocktaking of themes, but it's unmistakably the work of an artist who goes his own way.

Politics ★★★★★
Entertainment ★★★



books

A Cause for our Times

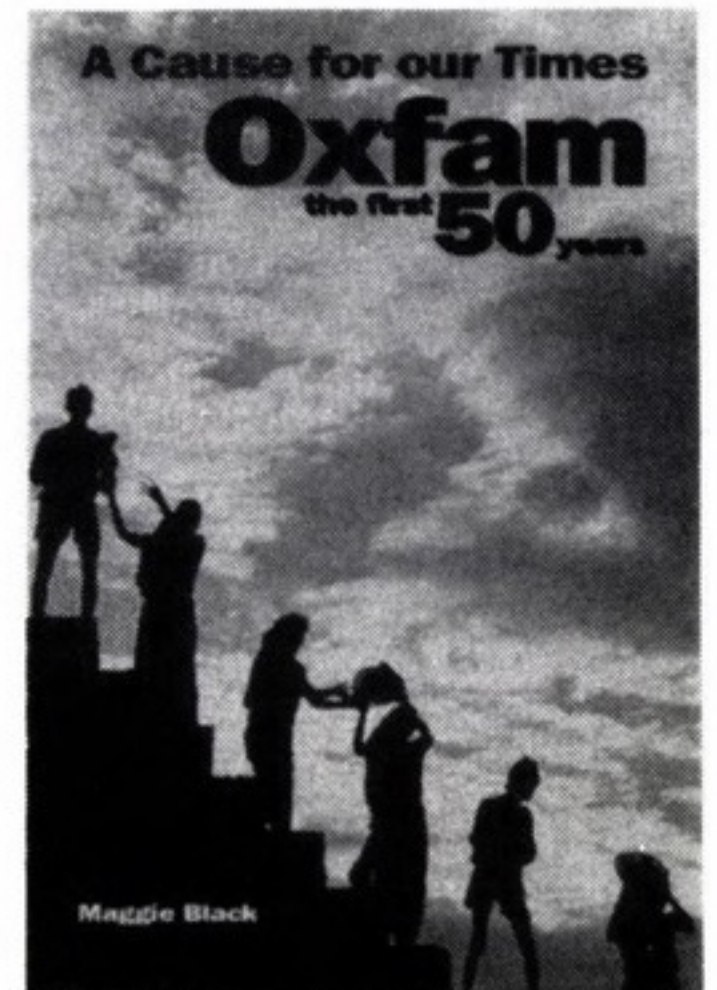
by **Maggie Black** (*OUP and Oxfam UK*)

Like our own issue on the subject a year ago, this official biography of Oxfam on its 50th birthday is more than just a profile of a single development charity. The book deserves a much wider readership because it is to a large degree the unofficial biography of the whole pro-Third World movement of which this magazine is also a part.

All the landmarks in the history of world development appear here. There are the emergency events which stand out in terrible starkness in the collective memory, all those famines driven by civil war: Congo in 1961; Biafra/Nigeria in 1967-9; Ethiopia in 1983-5. There are the big ideas: development itself, when it first came to be separated from emergency relief; the notion that aid agencies' campaigns could really change the world; theories like Paulo Freire's 'conscientization' and Julius Nyerere's *ujamaa*. And there are the changes in the approach to voluntary aid: from amateurism to ever-increasing

professionalism; from liberal sahibs doling out charity, to people trying to live up to the idea of 'partnership'; from starving-baby ads to sophisticated and sensitive fundraising images.

Through it all runs the principle of humanitarian neutrality, the idea that the people who end up hungry or sick through conflict deserve succour even if they are on the other side. This was the notion that set Oxfam in motion during the Second World War, as Greeks on the other end of Churchill's 'total war' blockade



starved to death. Occasionally Oxfam has strained at this leash itself, wanting to take a partisan position in Biafra and Cambodia, but it is nevertheless a vital principle which is brought full circle in this book, ending as it does with Oxfam's publicizing of the plight of Iraqis after the Gulf War.

Occasionally your eyes glaze over as names and campaigns appear and disappear. But there is as little user-unfriendly detail as there could have been in an official history – Maggie Black has done an excellent job in meshing this with the movement of ideas in the wider world.

She had a spell as an **NI** editor in the 1970s and will actually be guest-editing our next issue. But despite this close connection with us her book unintentionally leaves the reader with a slightly confused impression of the history of the *New Internationalist*. It documents the original funding of the magazine by Oxfam and Christian Aid. But the reader is likely to be left assuming that we are still in their pockets when we have in fact been independent since 1979. A tiny point in Oxfam's history but an enormous one in ours.

Politics ★★★★★
Entertainment ★★★

STAR RATING

Excellent ★★★★★
Very good ★★★★
Good ★★★
Fair ★★
Poor ★

Reviews editor: **Chris Brazier**

film OF THE YEAR

There was no one film of the year inhabiting our territory so we're giving honourable mention to three outstanding mainstream films which had some political dimension.

Clint Eastwood's **Unforgiven** managed to reinvent the Western genre as well as Eastwood's own ruthless screen image in the portrait of a reformed gunfighter.

The finest non-Hollywood film was James Ivory's **Howard's End**, a faultless and magnificently mounted adaptation of EM Forster's classic novel, which on one of its many levels dramatizes the brutality of capitalism.

Last but not least there was **Beauty and the Beast**, in which Disney managed to update both an ancient tale and its own classic formula by creating a female hero with a feminist spark.

music OF THE YEAR

Committed to Amnesty, godfather to WOMAD: **Peter Gabriel**'s image as the saintly man of pop only seems to increase over the years. With the release of his new album **Us (Real World)**, he was also acclaimed for his honesty, subtlety and perception, though if you were wanting to look on the down side you could see this set of songs about relationships as the musical equivalent of Robert Bly's book *Iron John*.

In these lusciously conceived backing tracks, Gabriel proves himself to be one of the few mainstream pop artists who can use influences from international music as more than just exotic flavouring. African drumming, Russian singers and Turkish flute feature here alongside the more customary high-tech, but the match is intelligent, unobtrusive – and very impressive.

book OF THE YEAR

The Third Revolution (IB Tauris/Penguin) is of course the green one and here **Paul Harrison**, who has been popularizing Third World concerns superbly for years, looks at the implications of environmental sustainability for development.

That sounds dry but the book is not. The sheer quantity of information marshalled here is staggering, yet it is showcased by writing that is both elegant and eloquent. And if you want a book that tells you all you need to know about environment and development – passionately, provocatively, persuasively – then this is the one for you.

What's Going On

... being the record that gave social concern a soul soundtrack

WITH **What's Going On** Motown soul traded its songs of innocence for songs of experience. The famous black record label had enriched the Sixties with a vast array of three-minute jewels, each created according to the strict house rules of owner-dictator Berry Gordy. When long-established star Marvin Gaye emerged from a period of inactivity with the album **What's Going On** Gordy at first refused to release it: it broke all the rules and he described it as 'the worst record I ever heard'.

His ears failed him: it was sublime. Motown singles are divine in their own way: what could be more perfect than Smokey Robinson's *The Tracks of My Tears* or Marvin Gaye's own biggest hit from the Sixties, *I Heard It Through The Grapevine*? But **What's Going On** was like an out-take from a recording session on some higher plane. Here was the Motown gift for melody relaxed into long pieces flowing seamlessly into each other. Here was an orchestra used more intelligently than any pop record had hitherto, as an integral part of the whole rather than just a vulgar 'touch of class'. And here was Gaye's own voice in an inspired new form: silky and at ease with itself, where it had once sounded strained, it swooped and soared through the album, now in rich falsetto, now double-tracked in an echo of Gaye's early fame as a duettist with the likes of Tammi Terrell.

Tammi Terrell's death from cancer in 1970 at the age of 24 plunged Gaye into the period of isolated reflection that eventually spawned **What's Going On**. Gaye lost all interest in performing and in his former stylish, slick-suited image; he started thinking about life and the world in a way he never had before. His younger brother had recently returned from Vietnam: 'He told me some pretty horrible stories about the war,' said Gaye. 'It caused me to think hard about society... and I felt the strong urge to write music and lyrics that would touch the souls of men...'

There is no doubting the social concern of **What's Going On**, as the song titles alone make clear: *Save the Children*, *Mercy Mercy Me (The Ecology)*, *Inner City Blues (Make Me Wanna Holler)*. But over the years the record has also acquired a reputation for political radicalism which it doesn't deserve. True, *Mercy Mercy Me* focussed on Green concerns long before they became fashionable, but beyond that the closest the album comes to a political statement is in suggesting that the money for 'moonshots' should be spent on 'the have-nots'. And the stunning title-

track is marred by its unquestioning association of 'picket lines and picket signs' with 'brutality', as if this were the greatest social problem of all.

For the most part the record expresses outrage and bewilderment at the violence in the world. It asks simple questions like those Gaye puts into his Vietnam vet brother's mouth: 'When will people start getting together again? Are things really getting better like the newspapers say?... Say man I just don't understand what's going on across this land. What's happening brother?' Or later: 'Who really cares? Who is willing to try to save a world that is destined to die?'

Marvin Gaye has no political answers to these questions but he does have another answer: God. In some ways it is bizarre that

What's Going On has such an eternally hip reputation. Lines like the following would be laughed out of court in most other quarters of popular culture, assumed to be part of the TV Evangelist Sunday School Songbook: 'God is my friend, Jesus is my friend/ He made this world for us to live in and gave us everything... He loves us whether or not we know it and he'll forgive all our sins'. Gaye's own original

sleeve notes were thankfully excised from the British version of the record: 'Find God: we've got to find the Lord. Allow Him to influence us. I mean what other weapons have we to fight the forces of hatred and evil. And check out the Ten Commandments too. You can't go too far wrong if you live them, dig it... Thank you Jesus.' Come back John Denver, all is forgiven.

Seriously, Christian performers in the popular arena have long ago learned to be careful about how they present their faith, especially within style-obsessed youth culture. But Marvin Gaye is blithely unconcerned about such tactics and comes up trumps anyway: this music is of such transcendent quality that his claim to divine inspiration begins to seem plausible.

But if God was using Marvin Gaye as a vessel it didn't last long. After one more classic album (*Let's Get It On*, an explicit celebration of sex from the male viewpoint) he descended deeper and deeper into self-destruction, developing a heavy cocaine habit, hurting the women he loved and wasting his talent. A decade later, in 1982, he made one more strong LP, *Midnight Love*, but in 1984 came to a sordid end, shot dead by his preacher father in a domestic dispute.

Marvin Gaye's life story makes depressing reading. Much better to stick to **What's Going On**, when he managed to look the world's ugliness and brutality in the face while creating music that lifts us far, far above it. ■

Chris Brazier

What's Going On by Marvin Gaye (1971).





QUESTIONS

...that have always intrigued you about the world will appear in this, your section, and be answered by other readers. Please address your answers and questions to 'Curiosities'.

Is it better to leave a fluorescent light switched on when you leave a room? If so, at what point does it become more economic to switch off?

● In the mid-1970s I asked the same question of the then Scottish Electricity Board. They sent out a man to explain to me the mysteries of 'starting' and 'running'. His opinion was that, in my situation as a teacher, it would be better to leave the lights on for the 15 minutes of the mid-morning break but to switch them off during the 50-minute dinner break and, of course, at the end of the school day.

MM Hendry,
Edinburgh, Scotland.

● Fluorescent lights consume less energy than incandescent bulbs to give the same amount of light. But fluorescent light bulbs contain a device called a 'ballast' to start the lamp and regulate the electric current. The ballast consumes extra power when the lamp is switched on so the running costs of a fluorescent light will not be lower if the lamp is regularly switched on and off. However, of greater economic concern is the effect on life expectancy of the bulb. The UK Consumers' Association has run tests on fluorescent lights and notes that regularly switching a lamp on for only five minutes could result in it lasting just 20 per cent of its rated life. And fluorescent lights are expensive to replace. If left on



continuously, however, a lamp may last 150 per cent longer than its average life expectancy. So when does it become economic to switch it off?

US lighting consultants Rising Sun Enterprises of Colorado recommend the following: switch off a fluorescent lamp if you're going to be out of the room for more than 15 minutes. For an incandescent bulb they recommend just five minutes. But for the new compact fluorescent bulbs they suggest switching off only if you're going out for more than half an hour – an indication of the superior energy savings of such bulbs.

However, the best rule of thumb must surely be: 'If in doubt, switch off'. In so doing you reduce your electricity bill and cut your contribution to global pollution created by power stations.

Philip Parker,
Stroud, UK

● The short answer is 'no'. When you switch on there is a short surge about two or three times greater than the running current. But this only lasts about two seconds – insignificant compared with the power consumed while running. Bulbs used to suffer from a shortening of their lifetime every time they were switched on but this is no longer a problem with the modern types.

Tim Williams,
Chichester, UK

I understand that a waterless WC – using sawdust to produce a high-grade compost

– has been invented by a Swede. Can anyone tell me more

● It can be sited under a house and is ventilated through a flue to above roof level, with a small fan to assist air circulation. The toilet can be cleaned out once compost – which may include kitchen waste – has been produced. And it is reported not to smell. I understand one company in the UK deals in these: Compost Toilets, Swedal Leisure (UK) Ltd, PO Box 14, Egham, Surrey TW20 OQP.

A Chapman,
Brighton, UK

AWAITING YOUR ANSWERS:

How often I have heard the expression 'charity begins at home' used to justify a lack of charity. Who originally said it, to whom and why?

Dave Phillips,
Gwent, Cymru

Is it true that the menstrual cycles of women living together in women-only communities (convents, for example) synchronize? And if so, why?

Zoe Simpson Green
Oxford, UK

How much money is there in the whole wide world?

Robert French (aged 10)
Bristol, UK

Is it true that Great Britain is still paying for the First World War and if so to whom?

Elizabeth Atkinson,
Hastings, Aotearoa/New Zealand

big Bad World ANDY W. J. POLY P

DISASTER RELIEF



Rush to Point Zero

*Most people will move away pretty fast if they hear that a nuclear bomb is about to be exploded. Some, like **Juley Howard**, will move equally fast – towards it. She explains why, and how, she is trying to stop the British Government using Native American land for nuclear tests.*

WE first met the Western Shoshone Native People two years ago, a few days into what might be considered a crazy adventure to stop the British Government from exploding a nuclear bomb on Native land in Newe Segobia, US.

Greenpeace had flown two of us out to Las Vegas where we would meet our guide, get familiar with the situation and prepare our hike to the desert test site. Another woman from Britain would arrive the next day. Then the four of us would set out for 'ground zero', the point directly above where the underground explosion was to take place.

But first we had to meet Bill Posse Senior of the Western Shoshone National Council. He was the first Native American I had ever met – and apart from his Stetson and beaded necklace he looked pretty much like anyone else to me. We met in an empty classroom at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and he filled in permits from the Western Shoshone National Council giving us permission to go onto their land.

Our plan was to hike to 'ground zero', find somewhere nearby to hide for the night, then rush to the site just before the explosion was due and halt the test that way. But some of us were still jet-lagged and exhausted and the hike took longer than we expected. Shortly after nightfall our guide accidentally led us into a dead-end canyon and it was several hours before we realized our mistake. We had to retrace our steps and find the right canyon in the morning.

Meanwhile the US and UK nuclear-testing authorities had decided that reports from Greenpeace that protesters were in the vicinity should be treated as hoax. They would go ahead with the explosion anyway.

Dawn was breaking as we neared the danger area, a stream of traffic indicating that it had already been evacuated. But we were still two miles away! We threw down our packs and ran for it, arriving six minutes before the bomb was to be detonated.

Well, our protest worked – temporarily. The nuclear test was halted and we, of course, were arrested. We gave our Western Shoshone permits to the security guards as identification. Two months later, when our equipment was handed back, I found my permit screwed up into a tiny ball at the bottom of my rucksack.

Since then the US and the UK Governments have exploded another 15 nuclear bombs on Western Shoshone land. Two were detonated just days before President George Bush signed a eight-month moratorium at the end of September 1992. It means that there should be no more nuclear explosions in the area before June 1 1993 – the UN declared Year of the Indigenous Peoples.

Underground nuclear 'testing' in Western Shoshone has a far greater impact than the authorities would have us believe. Rock is liquefied, huge craters are formed and land is contaminated for

ever. Radiation is released into the air and seeps into ground water.

These nuclear tests are carried out when the wind is blowing away from the major population centres of California and Las Vegas. Western Shoshone tribal lands and reservations lie directly in the path of the fall-out.

All nuclear-weapon states explode their bombs on unconsenting nations. Americans don't set off nuclear weapons in Santa Barbara or Washington; they bomb the Western Shoshone nation. Russians bomb Kazakhstan, Han Chinese bomb Uygur territory, the French bomb Tuamotu Island peoples. Britain has bombed both Australian Aboriginal nations and the Western Shoshone.

When we went to court in Las Vegas – unlike most 'trespassers' on the Nevada test site we did get charged – we presented a case based on the Western Shoshone 'right to decide' the use of their land. As the rightful landowners they had every right to give us permission to walk on the land and effectively delay a nuclear test. Predictably the magistrate turned down our defence, claiming that we had offered no proof of the National Council's authority to issue such permits.

Actions such as ours may seem reckless, attention-seeking. Four white Greenpeace activists coming within inches of death grab the limelight. But for how long? A few hours? A few days?

Longer and less glamorous is the struggle for land rights of the Western Shoshone National

Council. Pauline Esteves, one of their representatives, explains: 'We want to be recognized as a nation according to the Treaty of Ruby Valley signed in 1863. The Treaty does not state that we gave up lands to the United States. We just gave a right of way, a passage in peace and friendship to benefit the immigrants. The land is not for sale. We see the earth as our mother. If we were to sell the land we would be selling ourselves.'

Now the Western Shoshone have given up trying to get justice through the US courts and are engaged in direct negotiations with the Government instead. The goals of the Western Shoshone people and those of their friends in the peace and environment movements may not be exactly the same – but they are similar enough for us to work together.

And what will happen in June year when the moratorium on nuclear testing in Newe Segobia comes to an end? Will we wait until then and leave it to the Western Shoshone people to make all the fuss?



The Western Shoshone National Council can be contacted via PO Box 68, Duckwater NV 89314. Juley Howard is an anti-nuclear and land-rights activist, who works at the Bristol Women's Centre in the UK.

Israel

THE biblical Hebrew name 'Israel' means 'a person who struggles with God'. Modern Israelis struggle not only with God but also with the Arabs. They struggle too amongst themselves, for they are divided between religious and secular, left and right, between western origin and oriental origin.

For Jews, Israel's very existence is a modern miracle. After 2,000 years of Jewish exile (Diaspora), and the Nazi Holocaust which claimed six million European Jewish lives, the new state rose from the ashes of British-mandated Palestine in 1948.

But Israel has never known peace. It has fought five major wars with its Arab neighbours since 1947. In the 1967 war it acquired the West Bank of the Jordan and the Gaza Strip. Initially seen as a security buffer against future attack, the Occupied Territories contain nearly 2.5 million Palestinian Arabs whose hostility to often harsh Israeli rule erupted in the *intifada* of 1987. International sympathy for Israel waned, even amongst Diaspora Jews.

In the 1992 election voters rejected the right-wing Likud, and returned Yitzhak Rabin's Labour Party to power on a



promise to restart the Arab-Israeli peace talks. Unlike Likud, Labour rejects a biblically sanctioned Greater Israel and favours trading 'land for peace'.

The cost of defence and absorbing Soviet and Ethiopian immigrants has led to a housing shortage, high inflation and record unemployment. Money

diverted to 'political settlements' in the Occupied Territories will now return to fund essential social projects.

If peace comes, some predict that Israel will become the high-tech Singapore of the Middle East. But peace may be elusive.

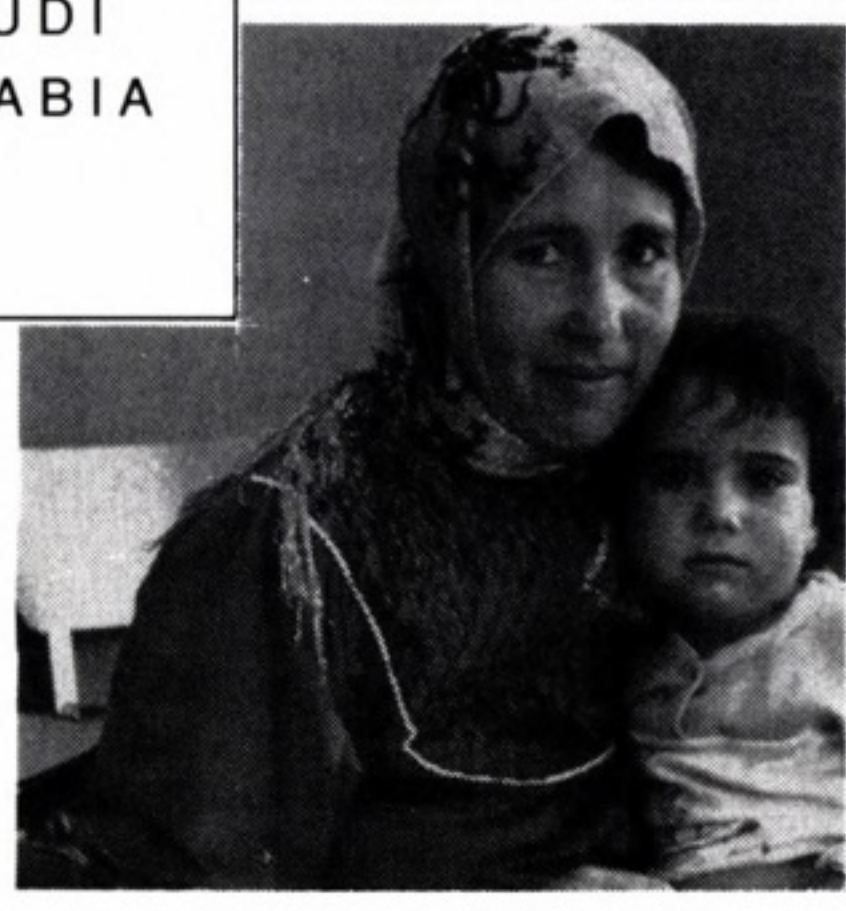
There are some four million Palestinians worldwide, almost

as many as Israelis. Like pre-Israel Jewry they long to 'return home'. Some 800,000 Arab Israeli citizens enjoy most civil rights, but their cousins in the Occupied Territories suffer from political constraints, deportations, curfews and punitive house demolitions. Behind the facade of heroic unity, Palestinians are split between hawks and doves, Christians and Muslims, secularists and fundamentalists. Israeli moderation serves to deepen the chasms.

Israel beat the British Empire to gain a state. It sees itself as David versus a 140-million strong Arab Goliath. But many Arabs see Israel as the West's Trojan horse and dispossession of their brethren.

Perhaps the new administration will change attitudes. The Occupied Territories are stuck in legal limbo, neither annexed nor granted autonomy. Old verities have shattered since the Gulf War and recent multilateral peace talks. Yet hours after Labour's victory, six more people had died in the Territories. Perhaps one day Jerusalem will live up to its Hebrew name – 'God's City of Peace' – but God alone knows when.

Lawrence Joffe



SUSAN SHAW

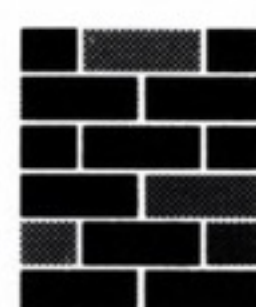
AT A GLANCE

Excellent ★★★★★
Good ★★★★
Fair ★★★
Poor ★★
Appalling ★



INCOME DISTRIBUTION ★★

Few millionaires, but many poor Palestinians.



SELF-RELIANCE ★

Much US aid, but economy diversifying.



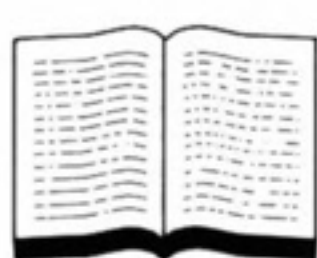
POSITION OF WOMEN ★★★

Can vote; have civil rights, but rabbinical laws affect marriage etc.



POLITICS

Labour coalition favours State spending.



LITERACY ★★★★★

95%. Good schools and universities.



FREEDOM ★★★★★

Good for Israelis; poor for Palestinians.



LIFE EXPECTANCY ★★★★★

76 years (US 76 years); lower for Palestinians.

Leader Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin

Economy GNP per capita US\$ 9,790 (US \$20,910)

Exports Arms; citrus fruit, avocados, nuts, flowers and bananas.

Much of the food production comes from the socialist *kibbutzim* (collective settlements) and *moshavim* (co-operative land-holdings). Tourism is a major foreign-currency earner. The US subsidizes Israel to the tune of \$400 annually for each citizen. In the Territories, olive trees form the mainstay of the Palestinian economy. The West Bank and Gaza form captive markets for Israeli goods and provide cheap labour for jobs which Israelis prefer not to do.

People 4.6 million

Health Infant mortality 14 per 1,000 live births (US 9 per 1,000).

Culture Israel's population reflects the diverse origins of Jewish immigrants.

Religion Israel is the world's only Jewish state, and 82 per cent of the population are Jews, with a Muslim minority and some Christians.

Languages Officially Hebrew and Arabic. French, English, Romanian, Russian and Amharic are also widely spoken.

Sources: *Keesings Record of World Events*, Vol 37, No 2, supplement 1991; *Israel and the Palestinians* (Longman 1989); *Jerusalem Report* magazine; *The State of the World's Children* 1992.

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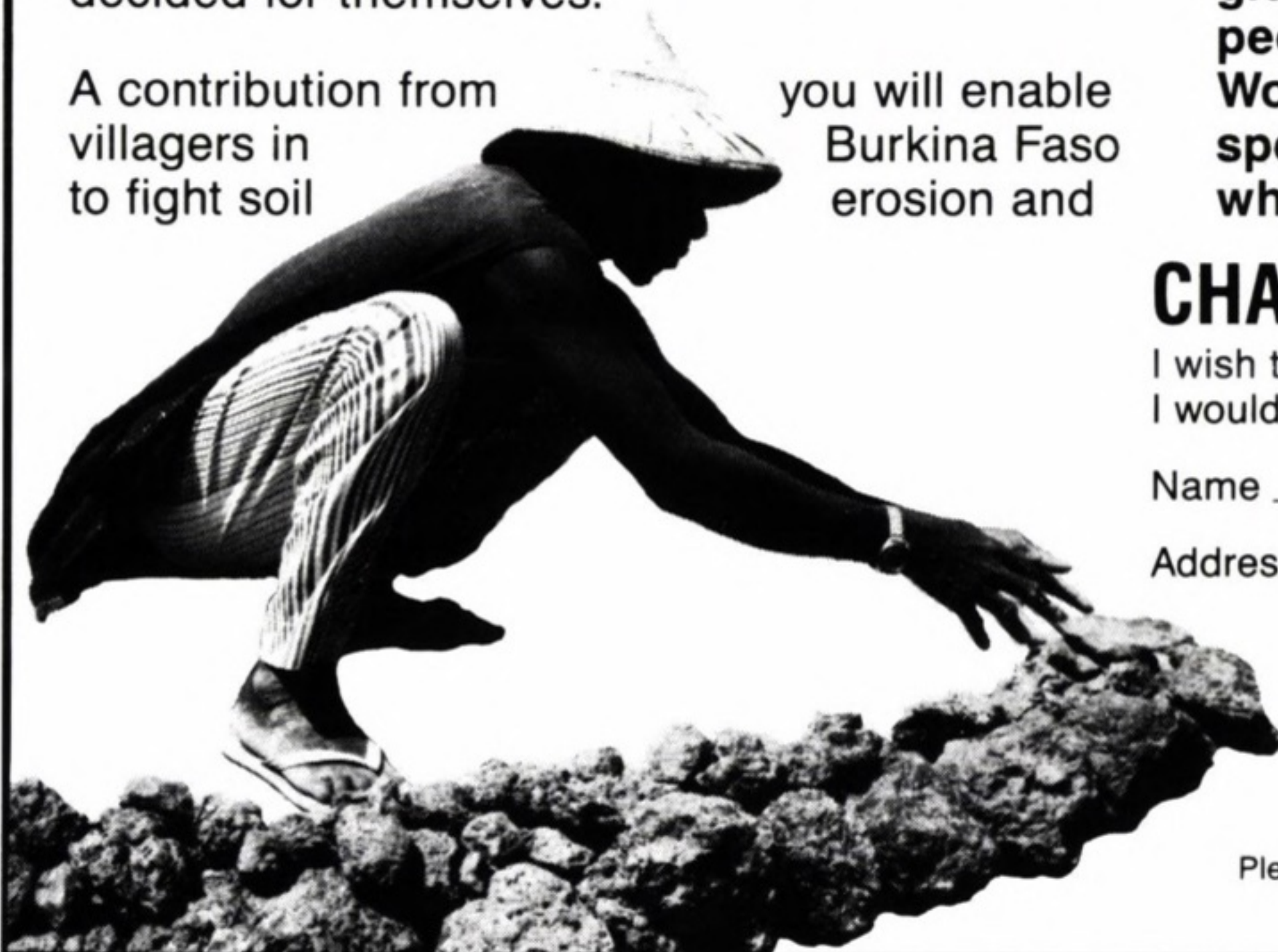
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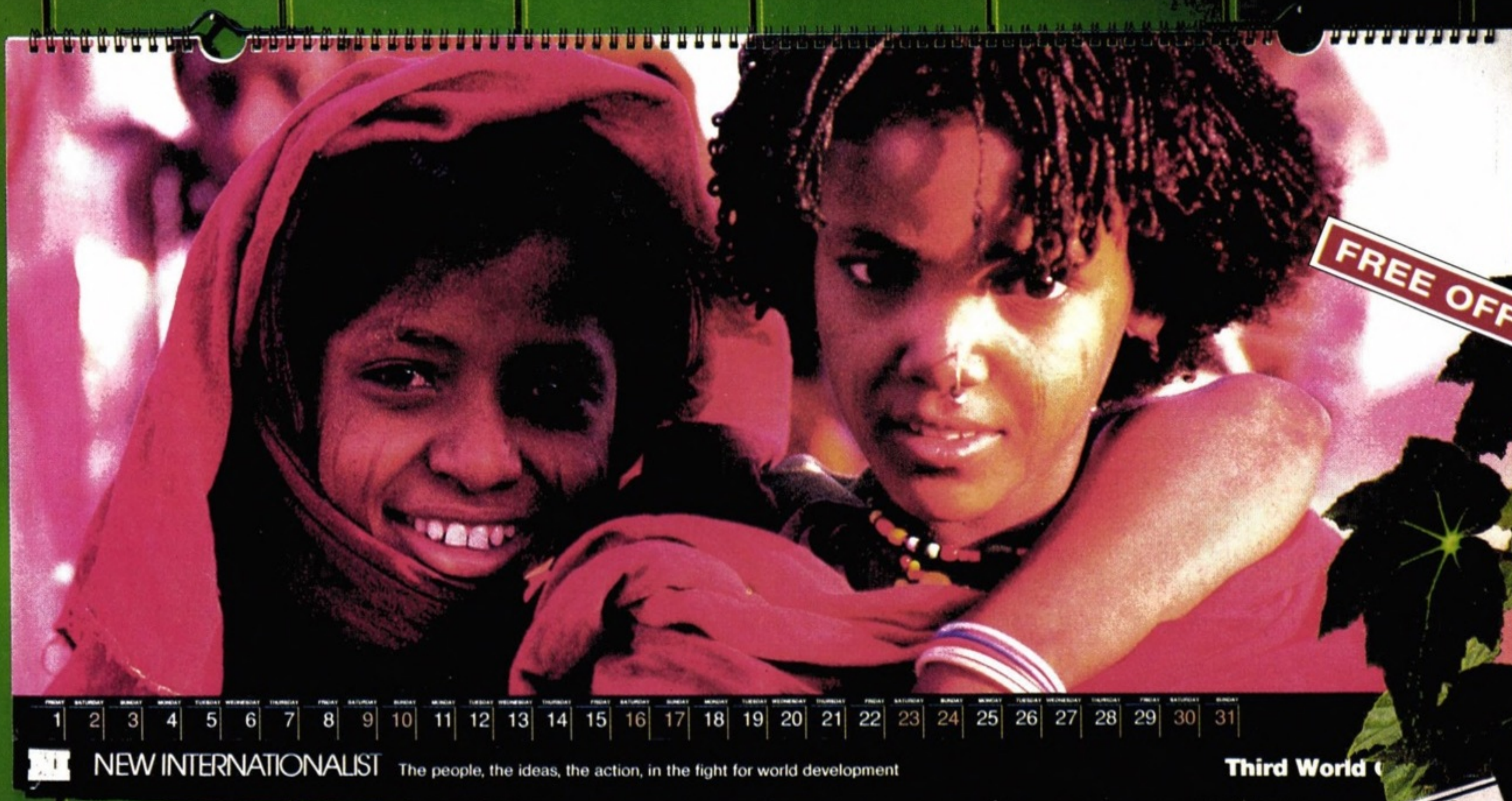
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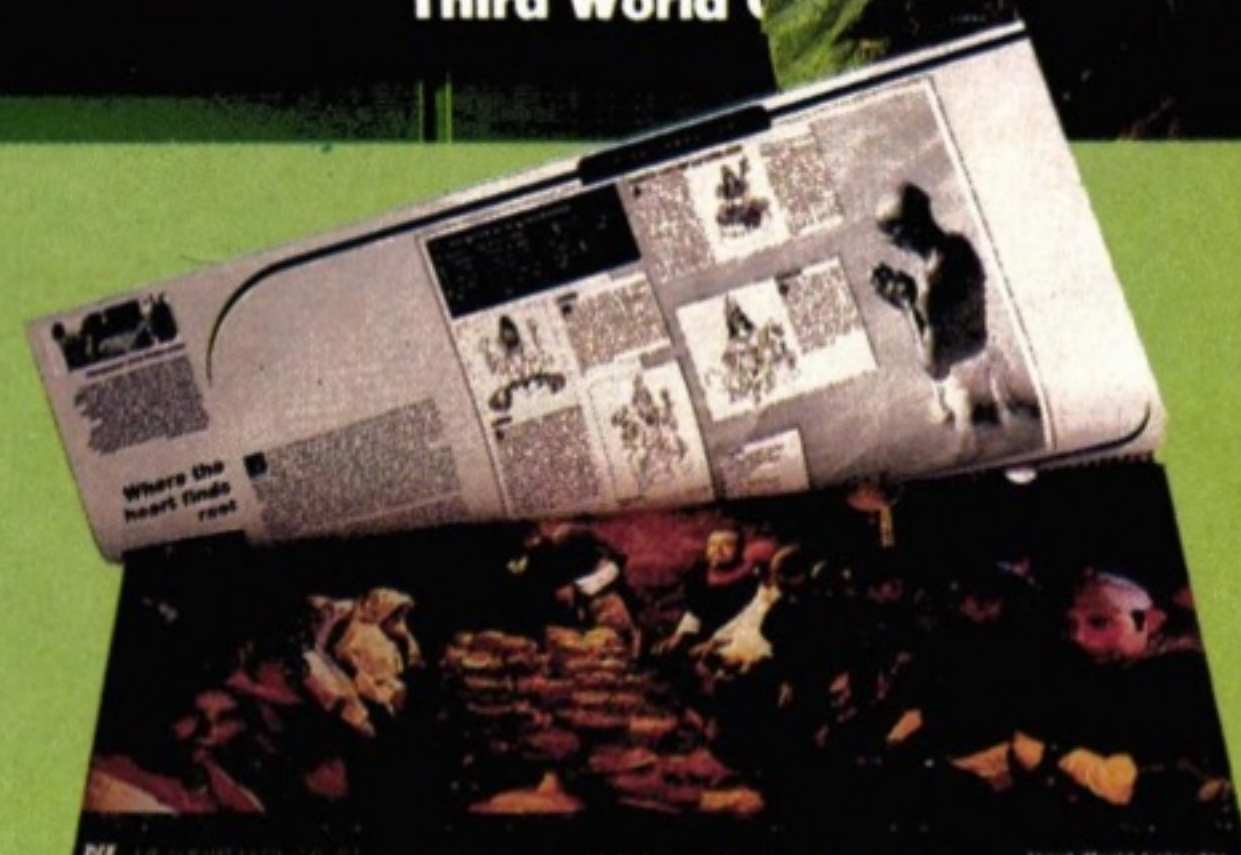
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